

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Gary W. Black, Commissioner



Report on Agriculture Labor

As Required by House Bill 87

January 2012

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America's well-documented illegal immigration problem has reached a fevered pitch. State leaders, including our own, have encouraged, urged and cajoled Administrations and Congresses for two generations in search of a real answer. Some argue that illegal immigrants drain resources that should be dedicated solely to citizens, i.e. jobs, education, healthcare. Others insist that illegal immigrants are so woven into society that their absence would cripple some areas of skilled labor and drastically reduce tax revenues which they return without any hope of redemption, i.e. federal and state income tax and social security. As the debate continues, a rightfully placed federal solution lingers on the horizon much like a summer afternoon cloud bank - lightning, thunder, wind, but no rain. Drought-parched, duty bound state elected officials across the country have moved to enact sovereign legislation to protect their citizens and treasury. It was really only a matter of time.

It is both fitting and convenient to turn to agriculture when launching a discussion on this issue. Non-resident immigrant laborers, those of legal and illegal status, harvest crops, milk cows, gin cotton and maintain landscapes. Georgia farmers and agribusiness employers widely attribute the need for these workers due to the fact that local citizens do not generally possess or care to develop the specialized skills associated with agriculture and, further do not regularly demonstrate the work ethic necessary to meet the productivity requirements of the farm business. It is important to note that existing guest worker programs provide legal paths for workers, but the paths are fraught with far too many business-choking idiosyncrasies – red tape problems that will be highlighted by this study.

Finding documented workers is relatively easy. In recent years, “authentic-looking” documents served as the ticket to legal employment. Advancement in e-verify technology and adoption of mandatory use laws have changed the ground rules completely. Producers must now adjust to what “legal” means in view of the legislation. The only answer lies in the prospects of a 21st century federal guest worker program that meets the needs of all types of agricultural enterprises. The integrity of such a program must be protected and accompanied by an unprecedented commitment to strict enforcement by appropriate authorities. We cannot afford to have this discussion again in 20 years.

I thank Members of the Georgia General Assembly for the confidence they expressed last spring in directing the Georgia Department of Agriculture to conduct this study. I thank the committed team of professionals at the Department who conducted the town hall meetings, managed the survey instruments and painstakingly struck the keyboards to produce this report from facts articulated by a wide range of stakeholders. I extend my gratitude to Attorney General Sam Olens, Labor Commissioner Mark Butler, and Corrections Commissioner Brian Owens for their valuable contributions and cooperation during this project. Finally, I thank the people of Georgia – farmers, business owners, parents, concerned citizens all – who contributed their honest opinions and direct observations which provided the backbone for the study. My hope is that together we can glean from the pages of the study and ongoing dialogue ideas that will propel our nation towards a solution.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary W. Black", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Gary W. Black
Commissioner of Agriculture
State of Georgia

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I. Background

The Georgia Department of Agriculture (“the Department”) was charged with conducting a study of the labor needs of agriculture in accordance with House Bill 87 and signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal on May 13, 2011 (See Appendix 1: HB 87 - Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011).

Additionally, the Department was instructed to create a written report of its findings and recommendations to be given to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House, by January 1, 2012.

Fulfilling the requirements of HB87, the Department conducted various activities described below resulting in the findings discussed throughout this report.

1. The Department was “directed to conduct a study of the conditions, needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto” and “consider the current and future impact of immigration on the state agricultural industry.”
 - a. To meet these objectives, the Department conducted an agricultural labor survey during the months of September through December. With the help of staff from the University of Georgia and the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”), the Department developed survey questions which would give a comprehensive study of the status of labor in the agricultural sector of Georgia. The survey was distributed to a random sample of individuals throughout the agriculture industry.
 - b. Commissioner Gary W. Black and Department staff traveled throughout the state holding meetings with producers both individually and collectively to gather qualitative data to fully comprehend the magnitude of the labor issues impacting agriculture. The Commissioner, Attorney General Olens, and legislative leaders visited farms in Moultrie and Vidalia in early July. While the end of the 2011 spring and early summer harvest was closing for the farms visited, producers shared their labor experiences for the year’s crops and explained their plans for the 2012 planting season. Additional meetings were held with various commodity groups and agricultural industry associations. Producers were encouraged to disclose specific information to appropriately account for the impact of the legislation.
2. The Department was also charged with “specifically address[ing] the need for reform of the federal H-2A program and provid[ing] recommendations for such federal reform.”
 - a. Commissioner Gary W. Black opened a dialogue between the Department and Georgia’s Congressional delegation in February, 2011 concerning the potential labor challenges for the coming harvest season.
 - b. Commissioner Black and Department staff attended town hall meetings through the summer, hosted by members of Georgia’s Congressional delegation regarding H-2A reform.

- c. Commissioner Black testified on October 4, 2011 before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security. He expressed the need for the federal government to provide a 21st century guest worker program for agriculture (See Appendix 2: Commissioner Gary W. Black Written Testimony).
- 3. In addition, the department was to “recommend changes needed in Georgia to provide for improvements in the H-2A process, (to) identify where such action may be taken by the state, and (to) provide a report evaluating the legal and economic feasibility of implementing a state guest worker program.”
 - a. The Department explored the concept of creating a state guest worker program by soliciting feedback from agricultural stakeholders and Attorney General Olens on the viability of such a program.
 - b. The Department worked in conjunction with the Governor’s Office and the Department of Corrections (“DOC”) to develop and conduct a pilot program to allow farmers to utilize willing probationers to assist with crop harvest.
 - c. Additionally, the Department researched other states’ activities and programs regarding immigration, H-2A reform, and agriculture labor issues.

II. Agriculture Status Report: Georgia Agriculture & Agribusiness

Georgia's agriculture industry continues to shine as the state's top economic driver. Georgia's farmers and agribusinesses contributed \$68 billion to Georgia's \$786.5 billion economy in 2009 with the wholesale value of farm products exceeding \$11 billion.

Georgia has almost 48,000 farms consisting of over 10 million acres. The average Georgia farm is approximately 210 acres. While extremely important, farmers make up only a small fraction of the thousands of Georgians who earn a living in agriculture and agribusiness. Georgia's agriculture industry is the primary source of employment in the state with one in seven employed in agriculture, forestry or a related field. Such fields include processing, shipping, retail, agricultural dealers and suppliers, and tourism.

Agriculture is a vital economic engine in most Georgia counties with 143 of 159 counties having in excess of \$10 million in farm gate value and 74 counties in excess of \$50 million in farm gate value. County by county, shining examples of agricultural production can be found throughout Georgia. In 2009, the following counties led in the production of Georgia commodities:

Mitchell:	Row & Forage Crops	\$79 million
Bacon:	Fruits & Nuts	\$54 million
Colquitt:	Vegetables	\$130 million
Grady:	Ornamental Horticulture	\$68 million
Clinch:	Forestry & Products	\$17 million
Macon:	Livestock & Aquaculture	\$39 million
Franklin:	Poultry & Eggs	\$341 million

Nationally, Georgia ranks first in the U.S. in the production of peanuts, pecans, rye, eggs and broilers.

In addition to traditional or production agriculture, Georgia has a vibrant urban agriculture/ green industry. Green industry agribusinesses include nursery growers, greenhouse producers, sod growers, landscape contractors, landscape and lawn maintenance, landscape architects, irrigation contractors, retail garden centers, floriculturists, golf course and athletic field construction and maintenance.

Economically, Georgia's urban agriculture industry is significant. The UGA Center for Urban Agriculture estimates urban agriculture businesses account for \$8 billion in sales annually, and these approximately 7,000 companies employ more than 80,000 workers.

While providing citizens across Georgia, U.S. and the globe a safe and wholesome food supply, farmers continue to face tremendous struggles. High energy prices have severely affected several staples of agricultural production – fuel for equipment, propane and natural gas for heating poultry houses, and higher fertilizer prices.

Aside from energy prices, the global demand for nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium remains strong resulting in high fertilizer prices. Drought conditions have returned and certainly, one cannot overlook the staggering impact of the current economic recession on farmers and others involved in agribusiness.

Despite these challenges, Georgia's farmers and agribusiness continue to provide citizens with the food and fiber needed to go about their lives. Agriculture is truly an economic engine that can help Georgia get back to the prosperity sought by all.

III. Agriculture Workforce in Georgia: A Study to Examine Employee Availability

A. Abstract

In 2011, the Department conducted a survey to examine the impact of immigration reform on agriculture in Georgia. A 36 question survey was designed and sent to over 4,000 agriculture producers, processors and other individuals in professions related to agriculture. Over 800 responses were collected and the major findings of the survey are as follows:

1. Survey respondents represented 138 Georgia counties and reported a variety of incomes and commodities.
2. Survey respondents reported hiring fewer fulltime and part-time workers in 2011.
3. Survey respondents reported paying their workers at or above the federal minimum wage.
4. Survey respondents reported having a lack of familiarity and negative perception of the Federal H-2A program and a low level of satisfaction with the Georgia Department of Labor for recruiting workers. Respondents strongly prefer hiring local workers, and they prefer using word of mouth to recruit and hire workers.
5. Survey respondents who reported economic losses due to the lack of available workers were producers of labor intensive crops.

Initial findings indicate that immigration reform is having an impact on agriculture, but results are inconclusive. As a result, additional research should be repeated in 2012 to determine if immigration reform is having an impact on the agriculture industry.

B. Introduction

This study explores trends regarding the availability of agricultural workers in Georgia. To obtain feedback on this issue, a 36 question survey was developed and administered to individuals engaged in various agricultural related industries in Georgia. Contact information for the study participants was obtained from various commodity commissions, professional associations and departmental information. These participants represent a random sample of agricultural producers, processors, agricultural service industries, and agricultural marketing functions. The survey was developed and administered online and was also mailed to potential participants. As of December 8, 2011, a total of 813 responses (19.2 percent) representing 138 Georgia counties were received. The survey results were analyzed with descriptive statistics and the findings are being reported as part of the requirements under HB87. Specifically, the survey looked to determine:

1. The impact of immigration reform on agriculture in Georgia

2. Recommendations regarding future immigration reform issues as they relate to agriculture in Georgia

C. Methods

The survey was developed according to recommendations on constructing a summated scale as described by Spector (1992). After questions were developed, the survey was reviewed and modified by researchers at the University of Georgia, the USDA and employees within the Department. The survey was then pilot-tested and modified again to ensure validity. Surveys were either completed on-line or on paper copies that were returned to the Department in self-addressed stamped envelopes. After the initial contact, follow up requests for participation were e-mailed and mailed to the study participants during a four week period as suggested by Dillman (2000). After a period of approximately two months, the responses were collected and the researchers closed the survey. Survey data was collected and entered online and descriptive statistics were obtained for each question within the survey.

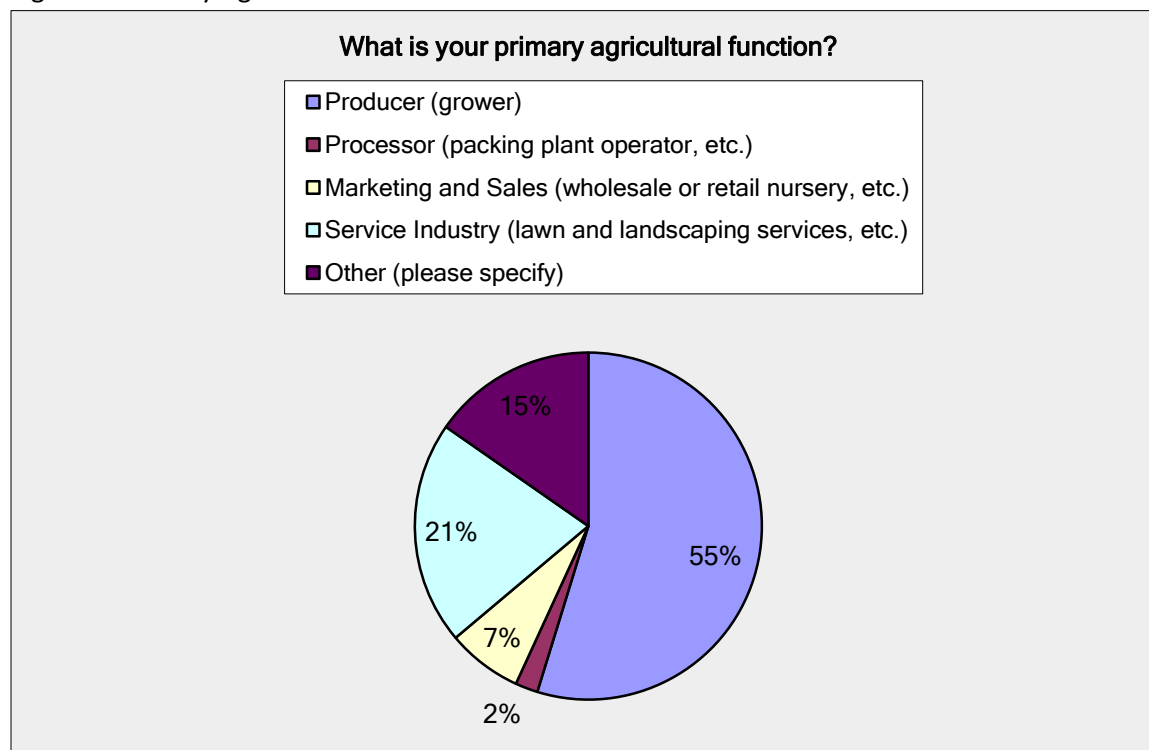
D. Survey Results

(All additional survey information is compiled in Appendix 3)

Question 1: What is your primary agricultural function?

Respondents were asked to identify the area of agriculture that represents their business operation. Over half of the 811 respondents (57.0%) identified themselves as agricultural producers. Another 22.5 percent of respondents identified their agricultural function as being in the service industry (lawn and landscaping services, etc.) An additional 8.9 percent selected other agricultural related functions such as golf course superintendents, retail and wholesale agricultural dealers, cotton ginner, and brokers/buyers. An additional 8.8 percent indicated they were associated with the marketing and sales of agricultural commodities and 2.8 percent are agricultural processors.

Figure 1. Primary Agricultural Function



Question 2: Please indicate the annual gross income of your harvest/operation.

Question 2 examined the gross income of the various operations of respondents. For this question, a majority of respondents indicated that the annual gross income of their operation exceeded \$1,000,000 annually (30.0 percent). An additional 15.9 percent indicated that their operation grossed between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 annually. Also, 14 percent stated that their annual gross income was between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Additional responses can be seen below in Table 1.

Table 1. Annual Gross Income of Harvest/Operation.

Please indicate the annual gross income of your harvest/operation		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than \$10,000	8.8%	70
\$10,000-\$49,999	11.3%	89
\$50,000-\$99,999	9.0%	71
\$100,000-\$249,999	11.0%	87
\$250,000-\$499,999	14.0%	111
\$500,000-\$1,000,000	15.9%	126
More than \$1,000,000	30.0%	237

Question 3: Please rank each commodity that you produce or process indicating their level of importance.

For this question, respondents were given the opportunity to identify the commodities they produce or process. The survey listed 42 commodities grown in Georgia and also listed an “other” category to capture specialty crops not commonly grown in Georgia. Additionally, respondents were asked to rank each commodity they grew based on its level of importance. A total of 694 respondents gave 1902 responses to the 42 different commodities listed in this question. The top 5 responses are listed in table 2 below. These responses are comparable to USDA Economic Research Service data for Georgia which lists cotton, peanuts and nursery/greenhouse operations as top 5 commodities. The entire list of commodities and responses can be reviewed in Appendix A.

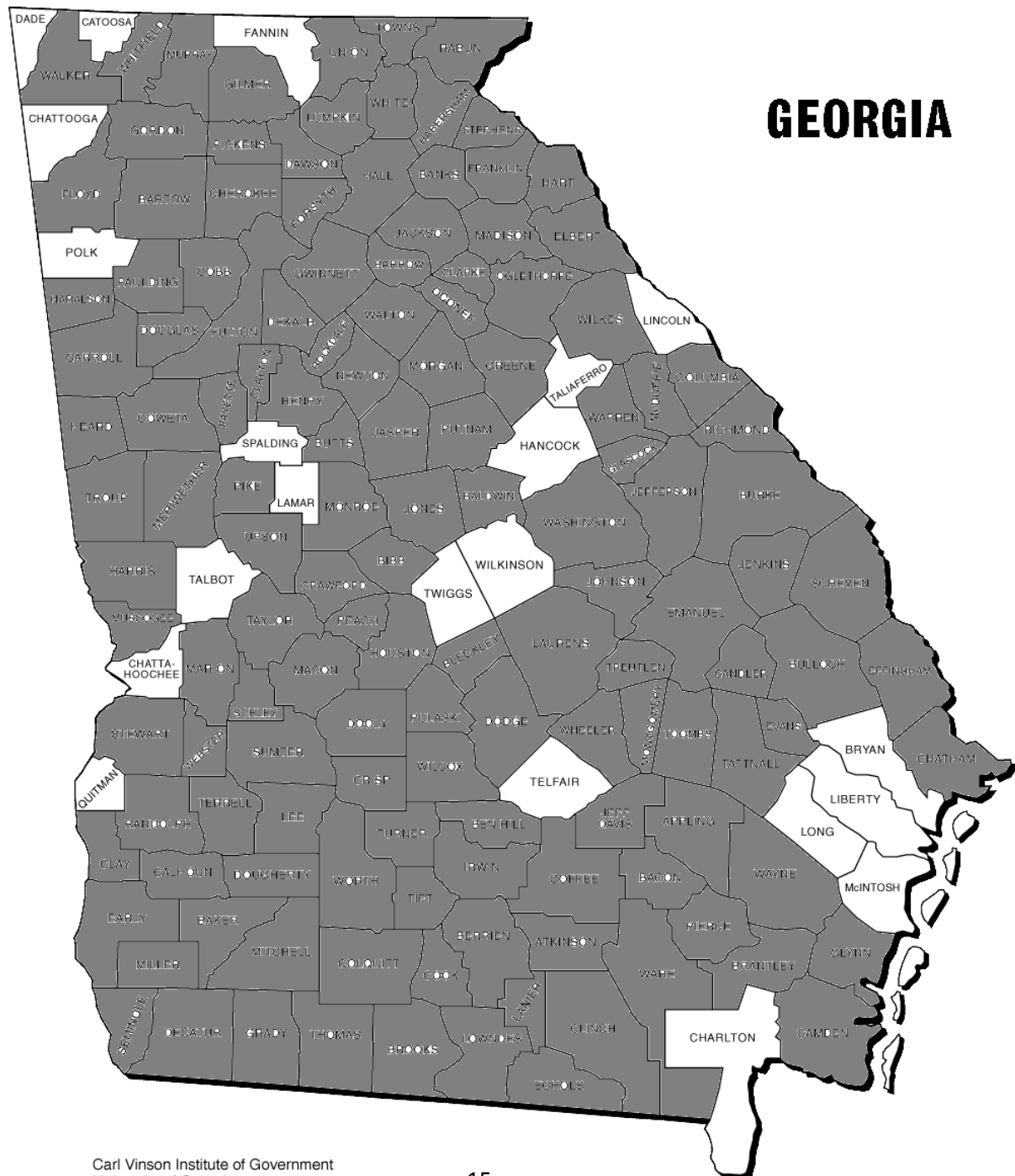
Table 2. Top responses to Commodity Rankings

Please rank each commodity that you produce or process indicating their level of importance		
Commodities	Response Percent	Response Count
Cotton	29.5%	205
Peanuts	29.4%	204
Ornamentals	28.8%	200
Corn	21.8%	151
Beef	15.4%	107

Question 4: Please list your home county.

As mentioned earlier, a total of 138 counties were listed by respondents as being their home county in Georgia. This represents 86.6 percent of the 159 Georgia counties. Rural and urban counties are represented and the entire list of responses can be seen in Appendix B.

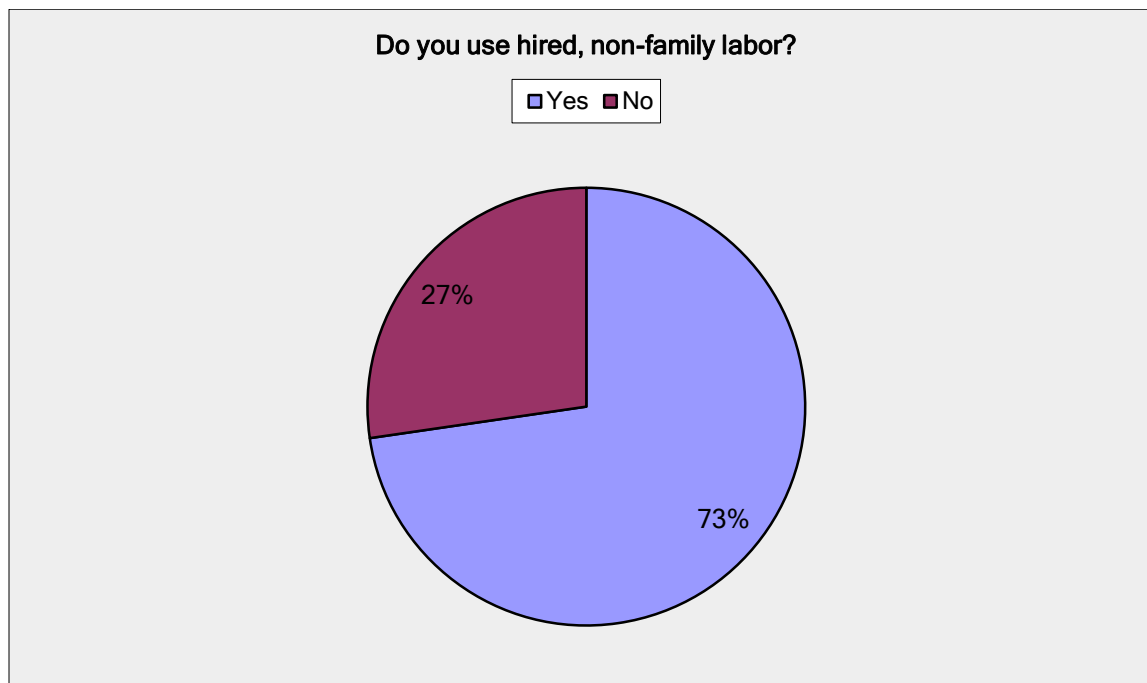
Figure 2. Map of Respondents by County



Question 5: Do you use hired, non-family labor?

This question was asked to determine how many of the survey participants actually use non-family farm labor. For this question, 591 of the 813 responses (72.7 percent) indicated that they do hire non-family labor to assist with their operation. The 222 respondents (27.3 percent) who answered no to this question were excluded from the remainder of the survey which has questions that focus solely on hired non-family labor.

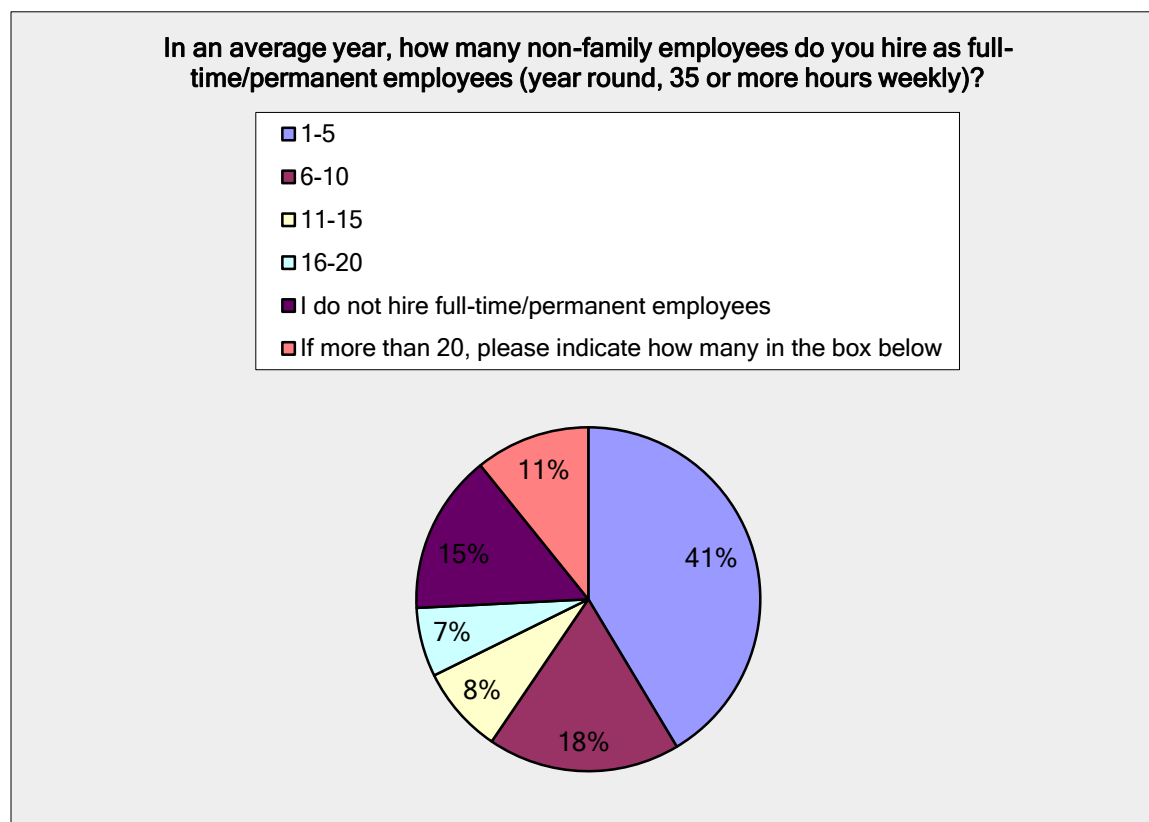
Figure 3. Percent using hired, non-family labor



Question 6: In an average year, how many non-family employees do you hire as full-time/permanent employees (year round, 35 or more hours weekly)?

Question 6 asked the respondents to report the number of full-time and/or permanent employees they employ annually. A total of 585 responses were collected with most respondents indicating that they employ between 1 and 5 full-time/permanent employees at their operation (41.4 percent). An additional 18.1 percent hire 6-10 full-time/permanent employees. Exactly 15 percent of respondents indicated that they do not hire full-time/permanent employees and 10.8 percent reported hiring more than 20 full-time/permanent workers at their operation. Among these respondents, 29 or 4.9 percent reported hiring 50 or more full-time/permanent workers. Figure 4 outlines the responses and Appendix C provides a complete list of all responses.

Figure 4. Number of and Percent of Employees Hired as Full-Time



Question 7: Relative to the last 5 years, is your number of non-family full-time/permanent employees this year:

Question 7 was an open-ended question that asked respondents to compare their current full-time/permanent staffing levels with those from the previous 5 years. The specific response choices and the response selections from survey participants are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Number of non-family full-time/permanent employees this year

Relative to the last 5 years, is your number of non-family full-time/permanent employees this year:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
about the same as the average from the last 5 years	52.3%	299
greater than the average from the last 5 years	12.9%	74
less than the average from the last 5 years	21.0%	120
I don't hire full-time/permanent employees	13.8%	79

For this question, a majority of the respondents (52.3 percent) said that their current number of non-family full-time/permanent employees was about the same as it was over the last 5 years. An additional 21 percent said they had fewer workers today when compared to the last 5 years and almost 13 percent indicated that they have more workers today when compared to the last 5 years.

Question 8

If you indicated greater or fewer employees in the previous question, please briefly describe why you have greater or fewer employees for this year.

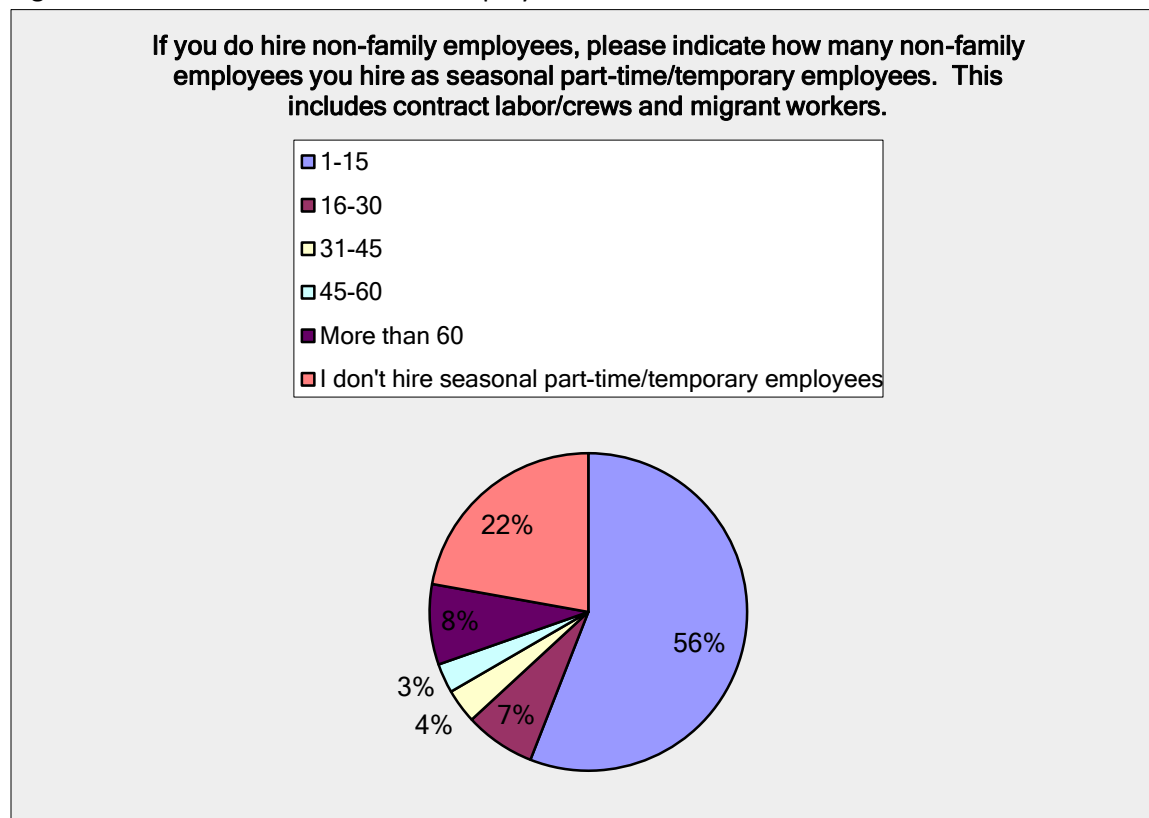
This question was asked to help determine why respondents in question 7 have a larger or smaller number of full-time/permanent employees now as compared to the last 5 years. A total of 321 responses were collected for this question. A complete list of the responses is provided in Appendix D. Major themes for the listing of fewer employees seen in Appendix D include: poor economy, loss of revenue, and lack of available workers (due to immigration law, fewer workers willing to do work, etc.). Reasons cited for an increase included: farm expansion, growth of our business, and an increase in sales/demand.

Question 9

If you do hire non-family employees, please indicate how many non-family employees you hire as seasonal part-time/temporary employees.

This question asked survey participants to indicate how many part-time/seasonal or temporary workers they hire on average. Results show that 56 percent hire between 1 and 15 part-time/temporary workers and an additional 8.2 percent hire more than 60 part-time/temporary workers. Additionally, 22.2 percent do not hire part-time or seasonal workers. Figure 5 provides a complete list of responses for question 9.

Figure 5. Number of and Percent of Employees Hired as Part-Time



Question 10

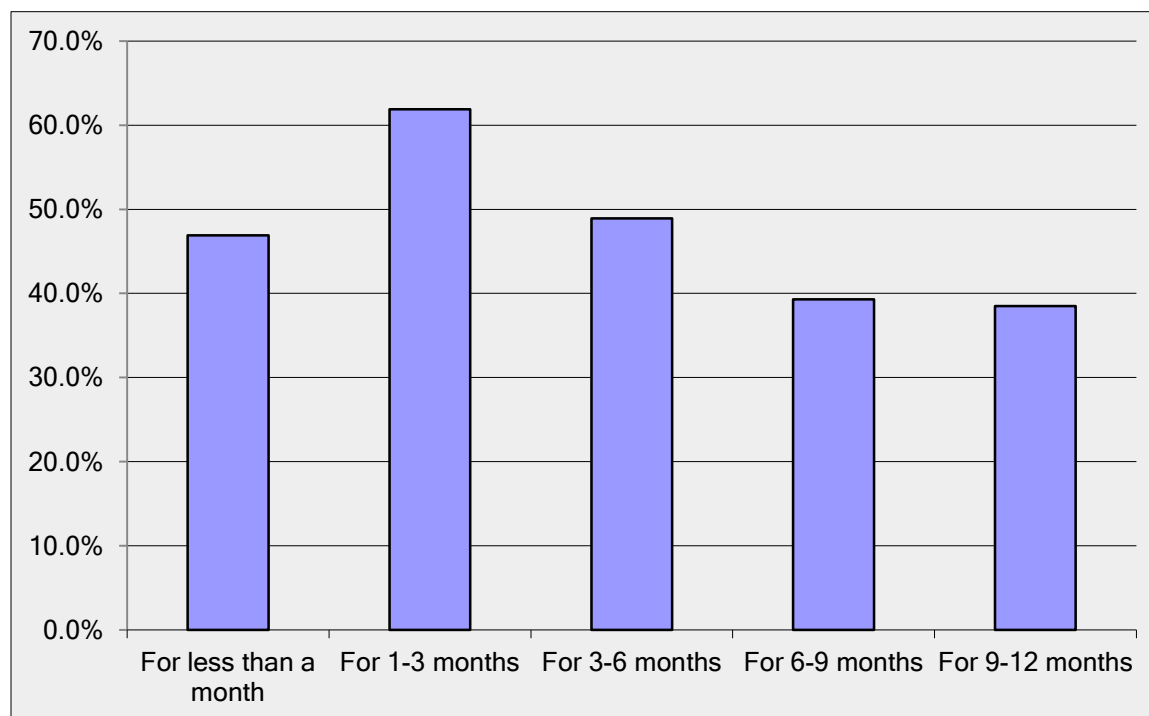
For each amount of time listed below, please indicate the number of non-family seasonal, part-time workers you typically hire in an average growing season.

For this question, respondents were asked to report an answer for each choice that fit their hiring patterns with regards to part-time workers. Respondents were also asked to indicate the number of employees they typically hire for each employment time interval listed. For example, a respondent may hire 8 workers for a period of 1 to 3 months and may also hire an additional 11 workers for less than a month. If this was the case, the respondents reported so in each area. A majority of the respondents (61.9 percent) indicated that they use 5230 part-time workers for a period of 1 to 3 months. This 1 to 3 month time period of employment was the highest response rate for both categories (period of hire and number of employees hired). An additional 48.9 percent reported using 2591 part-time workers for a period of 3-6 months and 39.3 percent reported using 2270 part-time workers for a period of 6 to 9 months. An additional 46.9 percent use 906 workers for less than one month and 38.5 percent of survey respondents use 751 part-time workers for a period of 9 to 12 months.

Table 4. By Time, the Number of Non-Family Seasonal, Part-Time Workers Hired in an Average Growing Season.

For each amount of time listed below, please indicate the number of non-family seasonal, part-time workers you typically hire in an average growing season		
Answer Options	Response Percent and Number	Total Workers Employed
For less than a month	46.9% (238)	906
For 1-3 months	61.9% (314)	5230
For 3-6 months	48.9% (248)	2591
For 6-9 months	39.3% (199)	2270
For 9-12 months	38.5% (195)	751

Figure 6. By Time, the Number of Non-Family Seasonal, Part-Time Workers Hired



Question 11

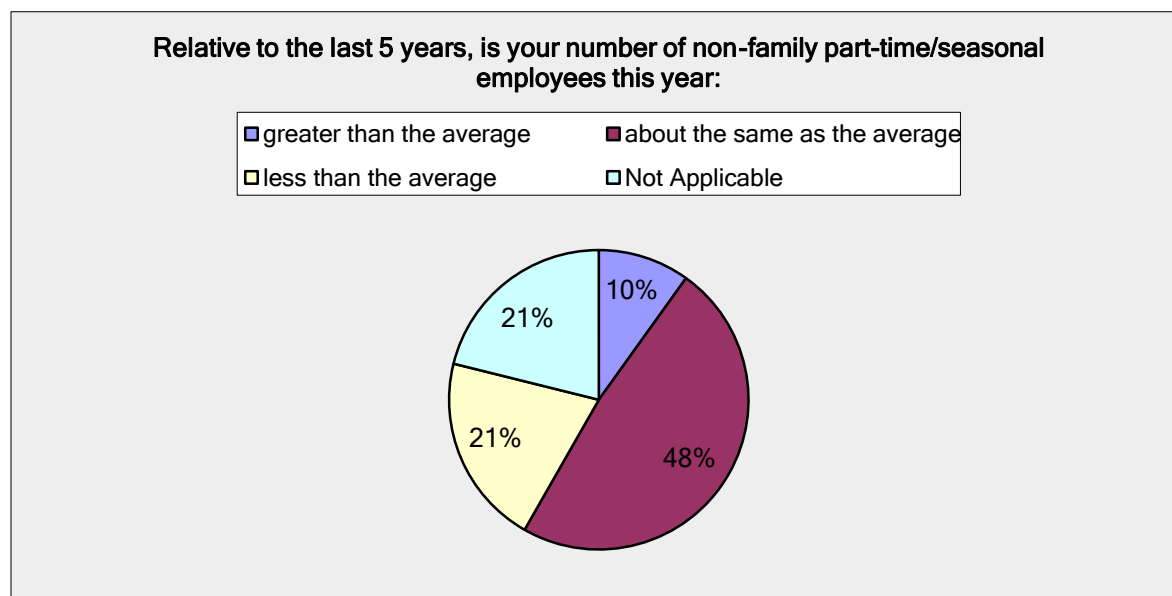
Relative to the last 5 years, is your number of non-family part-time/seasonal employees this year:

Question 11, like question 7 earlier, is an open-ended question that asks respondents to compare their current part-time/seasonal staffing levels with those from the previous 5 years. The specific response choices and the response selections from survey participants can be seen in Table 4 below. For this question, 48.3 percent of the respondents reported that their current staffing levels were about the same as the average from the last five years. A total of 20.6 percent reported having fewer employees when compared to the past 5 years and almost 10 percent (9.9 percent) indicated that they had more employees than the average of the last 5 years.

Table 5. Number of non-family part-time/seasonal employees this year.

Relative to the last 5 years, is your number of non-family part-time/seasonal employees this year:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
greater than the average	9.9%	59
about the same as the average	48.3%	288
less than the average	20.6%	123
Not Applicable	21.1%	126

Figure 7. Number of Non-Family Part-Time/Seasonal Employees



Question 12

If you indicated greater or less than average for the last question, please briefly indicate why you have greater or less employees for this year.

Again, question 12 is similar to question 8 and was asked to help determine why respondents in question 11 have a larger or smaller number of part-time/temporary employees now as compared to the last 5 years. A total of 338 responses were collected for this question. A complete list of the responses is provided in Appendix E. Major themes for the listing of fewer employees seen in Appendix E include: declining or poor economy, loss of revenue and demand, poor worker retention, etc. Reasons cited for an increase included: farm/company expansion and growth, an increase in sales/demand, etc.

Question 13

Please indicate the number of non-family full-time/permanent workers that are paid in each range listed below

This is a two part question that asked respondents to report the wages they offer full-time/permanent employees and the number of full-time/permanent employees being paid this wage.

For this question, 558 respondents reported paying wages to full-time/permanent workers in a variety of salary ranges. A majority of respondents (69.4 percent) indicated that they pay 2150 full-time/permanent employees between \$9.00 to \$11.00 per hour. An additional 64.9 percent of respondents reported paying 1722 workers between \$11.01 to \$15.00 per hour. Just over 60 percent (60.2percent) of respondents reported paying 1633 workers between \$7.25 and \$8.99 per hour. Finally, 48.6 percent of respondents said they pay 954 workers more than \$15.00 per hour and an additional 19.2 percent said they pay workers based on production or outputs.

Figure 8. The Number of Non-Family, Full-Time/Permanent Workers Paid in Each Range

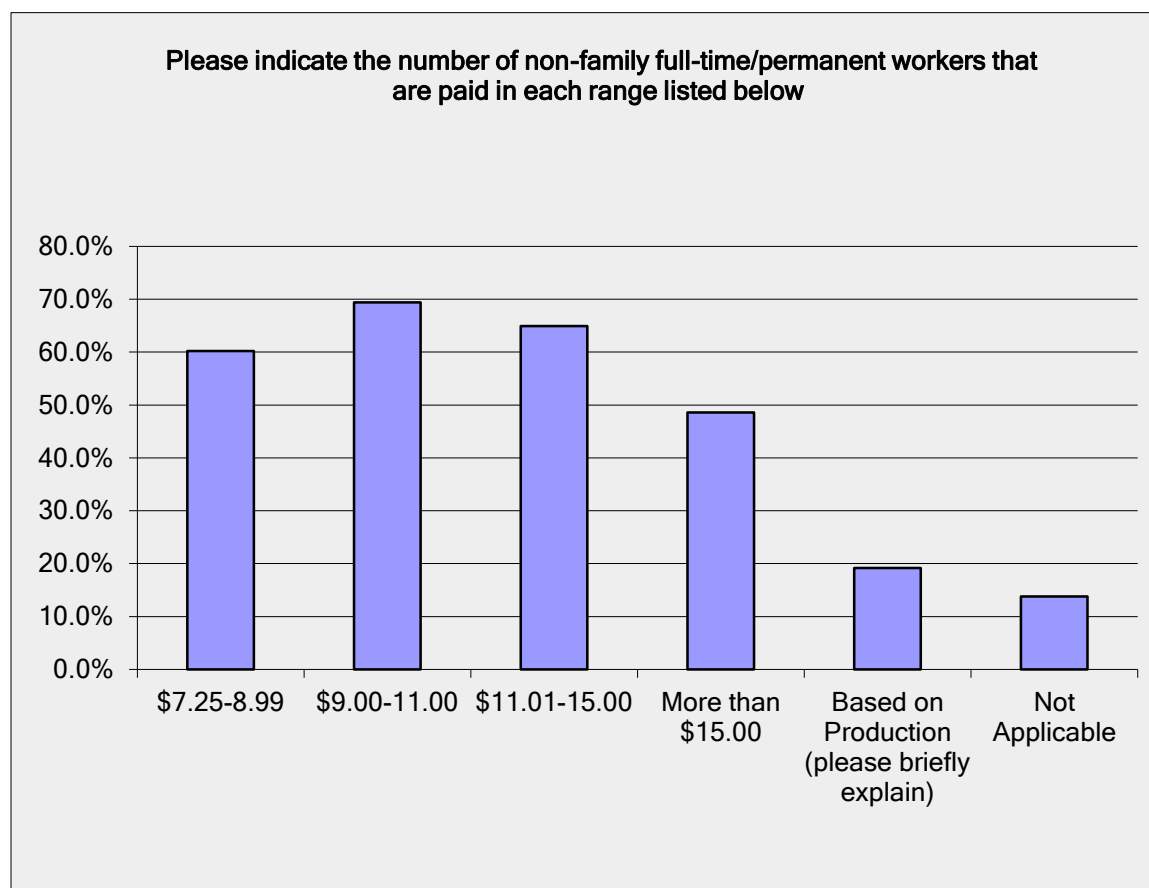


Table 6. Number of Non-Family Full-Time/Permanent Workers paid in Each Range

Please indicate the number of non-family full-time/permanent workers that are paid in each range listed below		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Total Workers for each Wage Range
\$7.25-8.99	60.2% (336)	1633
\$9.00-11.00	69.4% (387)	2150
\$11.01-15.00	64.9% (362)	1722
More than \$15.00	48.6% (271)	954
Based on Production (please briefly explain)	19.2% (107)	310
Not Applicable	13.8% (77)	NA

Question 14

Please indicate the number of non-family, part-time/temporary workers that are paid in each range listed below.

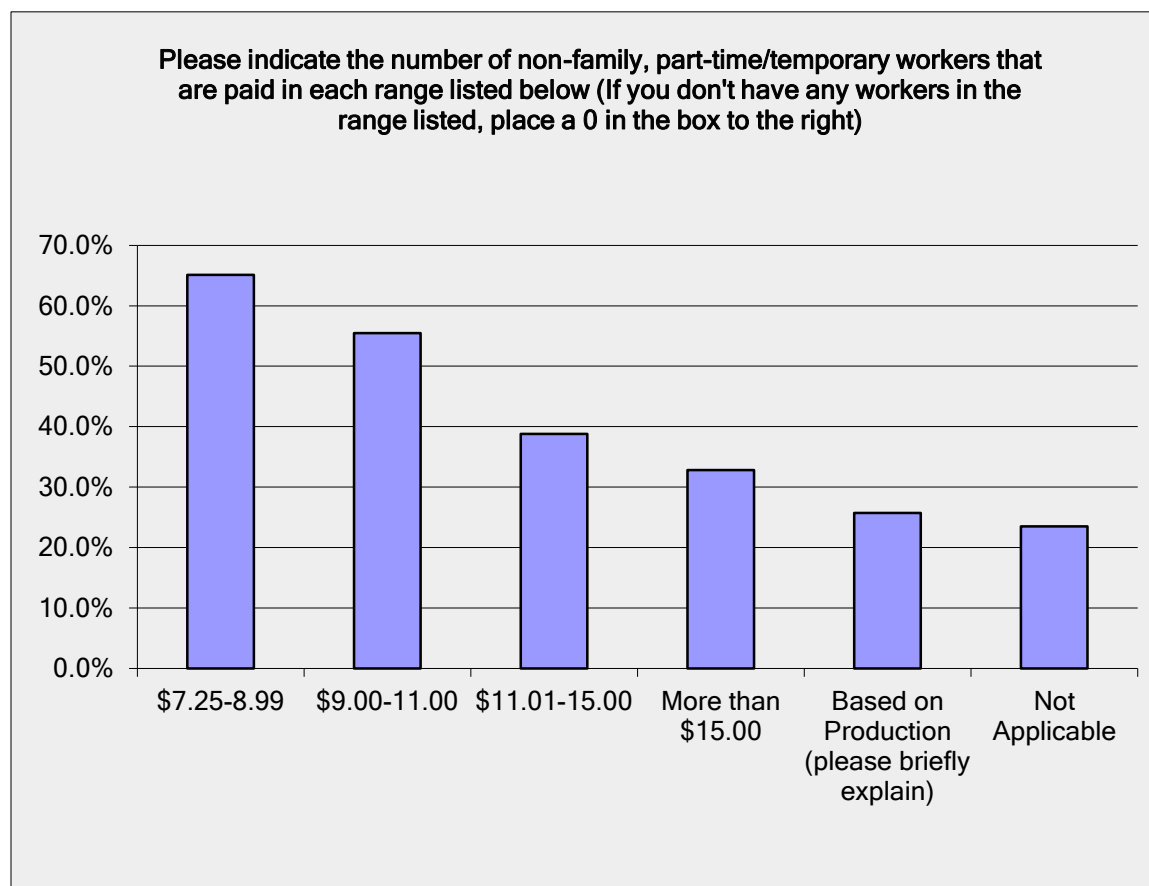
This also is a two part question that asked respondents to report the wages they offer part-time/temporary employees and the number of part-time/temporary employees being paid this wage.

For this question, 533 respondents reported paying wages to part-time/temporary workers in a variety of salary ranges. A majority of respondents (65.1 percent) indicated that they 3699 pay part-time/temporary employees between \$7.25 to \$8.99 per hour. An additional 55.5 percent of respondents reported paying 2652 workers between \$9.00 to \$11.00 per hour and 38.8 percent of respondents reported paying 773 workers between \$11.01 and \$15.00 per hour. Finally, 32.8 percent of respondents said they pay 177 workers more than \$15.00 per hour and an additional 25.7 percent said they pay 1451 workers based on production or outputs.

Table 7. Number of Non-Family, Part-Time/Temporary Workers paid in Each Range

Please indicate the number of non-family, part-time/temporary workers that are paid in each range listed below		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
\$7.25-8.99	65.1%	347
\$9.00-11.00	55.5%	296
\$11.01-15.00	38.8%	207
More than \$15.00	32.8%	175
Based on Production (please briefly explain)	25.7%	137
Not Applicable	23.5%	125

Figure 9. The Number of Non-Family, Part-Time/Temporary Workers Paid in Each Range



Question 15

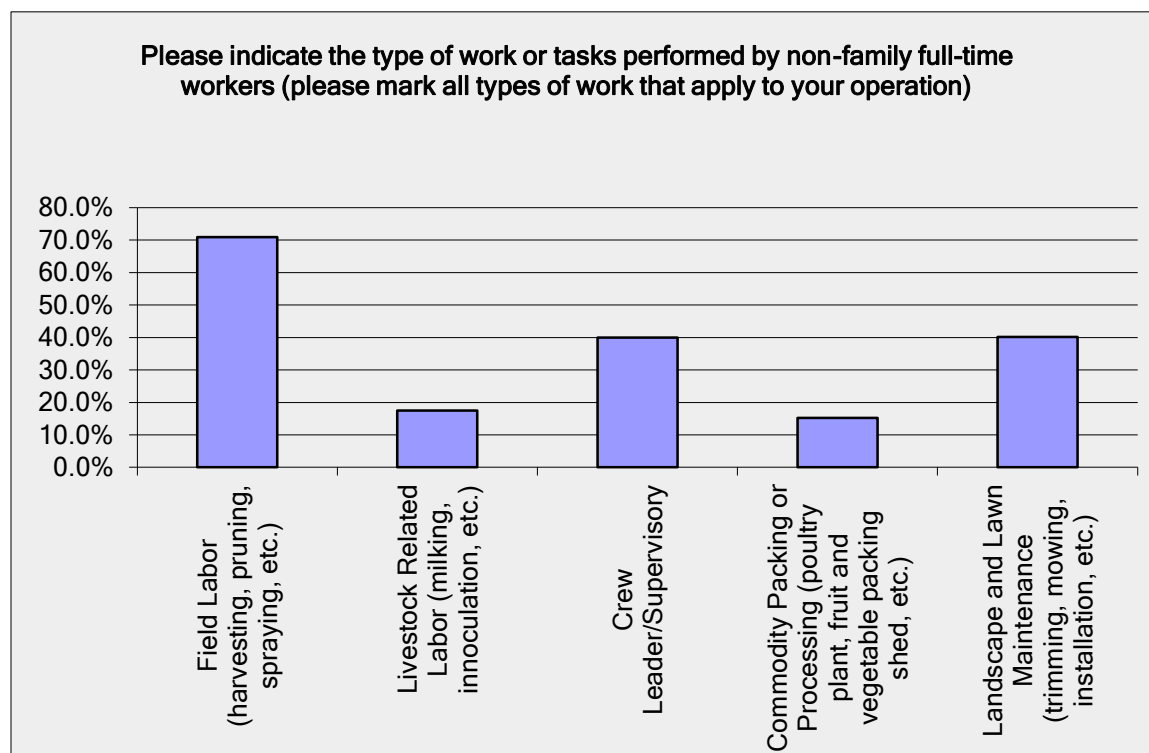
Please indicate the type of work or tasks performed by non-family full-time workers

This survey question asked participants to list all the types of work tasks performed by full-time workers on their operation. Respondents were allowed to check multiple tasks that applied to their agricultural function. A majority of the respondents (70.9 percent) listed field labor such as harvesting, pruning, spraying and other tasks. An additional 40 percent listed the crew leader and supervisory task and 40.2 percent listed landscaping and lawn maintenance as a type of work performed by full-time workers. Livestock (17.5 percent) and commodity packing and processing related labor (15.2 percent) were also listed as being tasks performed by full-time workers.

Table 8. Type of Work or Tasks Performed by Non-Family Full-Time Workers

Please indicate the type of work or tasks performed by non-family full-time workers		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Field Labor (harvesting, pruning, spraying, etc.)	70.9%	312
Livestock Related Labor (milking, inoculation, etc.)	17.5%	77
Crew Leader/Supervisory	40.0%	176
Commodity Packing or Processing (poultry plant, fruit and vegetable packing shed, etc.)	15.2%	67
Landscape and Lawn Maintenance (trimming, mowing, installation, etc.)	40.2%	177
Other (please specify)	5.9%	26

Figure 10. The Type of Work or Tasks Performed by Non-Family Full-Time Workers



Question 16

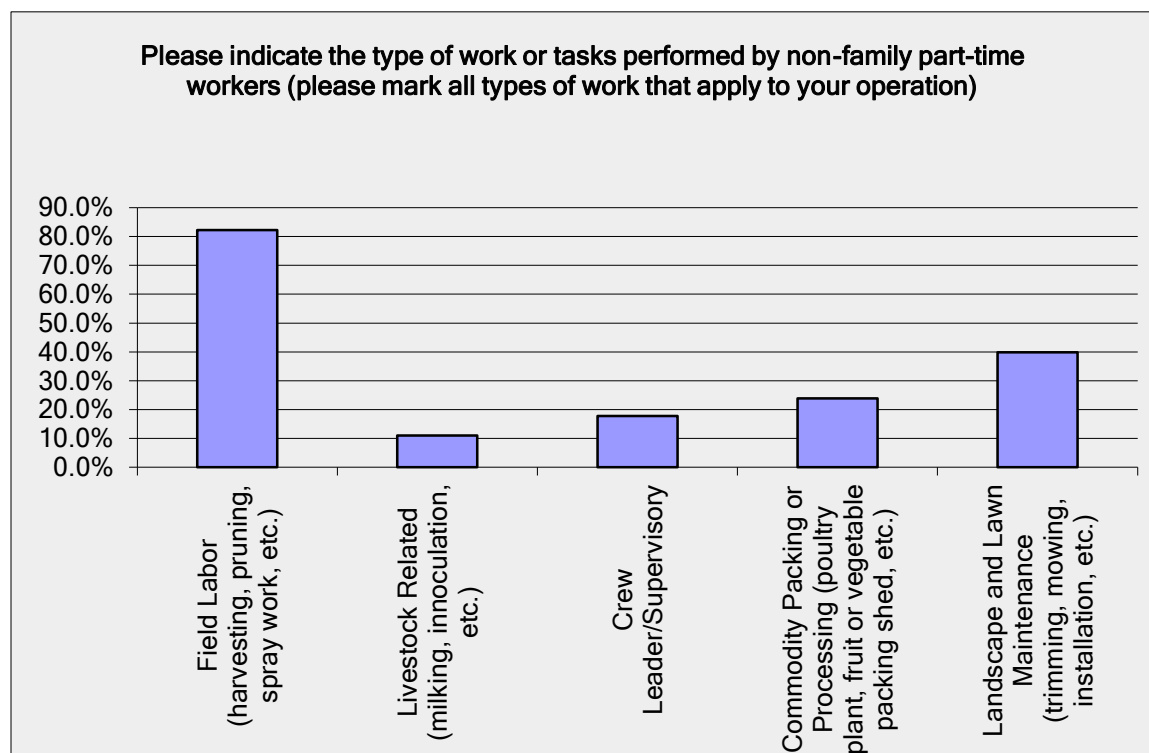
Please indicate the type of work or tasks performed by non-family part-time workers

As with question 15, this survey question asked participants to list all the types of work tasks performed by part-time workers on their operation. Respondents were again allowed to check multiple tasks that applied to their agricultural function. Again, a majority of the respondents (82.2 percent) listed field labor as a primary task performed by part-time workers at their operation. An additional 39.9 percent listed landscaping and lawn maintenance and another 23.9 percent listed commodity packing or processing as a task performed by part-time labor. Other responses included accounting/bookkeeping tasks, trucking/logistics, sales and maintenance.

Table 9. Type of Work or Tasks Performed by Non-Family Part-Time Workers

Please indicate the type of work or tasks performed by non-family part-time workers		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Field Labor (harvesting, pruning, spray work, etc.)	82.2%	313
Livestock Related (milking, inoculation, etc.)	11.0%	42
Crew Leader/Supervisory	17.8%	68
Commodity Packing or Processing (poultry plant, fruit or vegetable packing shed, etc.)	23.9%	91
Landscape and Lawn Maintenance (trimming, mowing, installation, etc.)	39.9%	152
Other (please specify)	5%	19

Figure 11. The Type of Work or Tasks Performed by Non-Family Part-Time Workers



Question 17

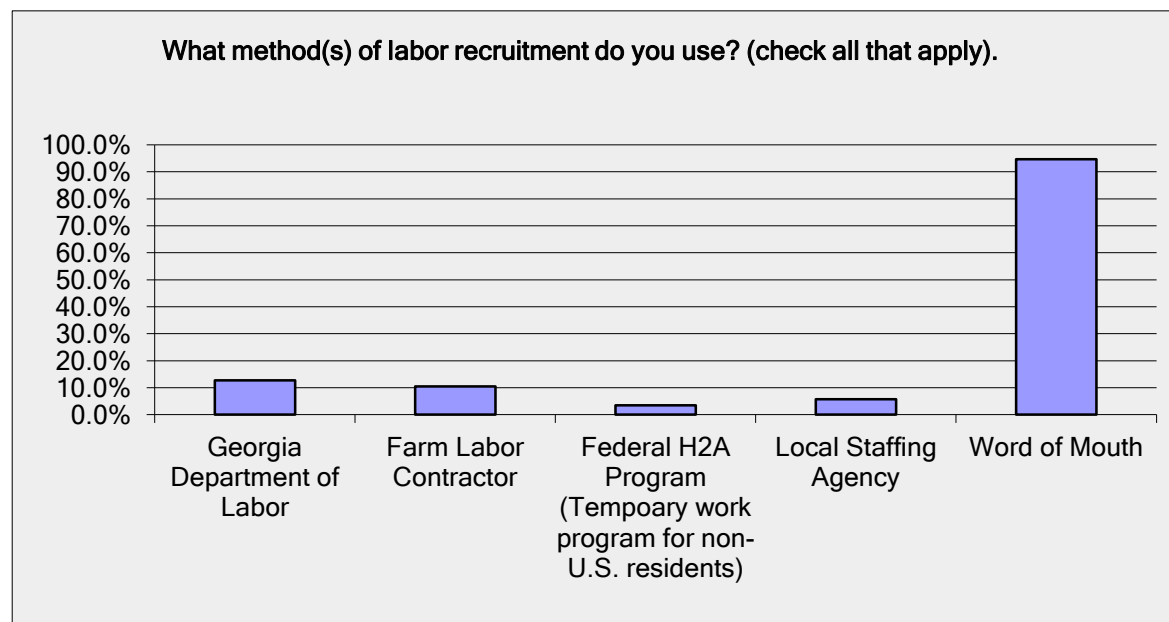
What method(s) of labor recruitment do you use?

Respondents indicated that a majority of their labor recruitment methods are via word of mouth (94.7). An additional 13.4 percent indicated using other recruitment methods (newspaper ads, Craigslist, employee referrals, etc.) and 12.7 percent reported using the Georgia Department of Labor. An additional 10.4 percent reported using a farm labor contractor. Only 5.7 percent reported using a local staffing agency to recruit employees and 3.4 percent reported using the Federal H-2A program.

Table 10. Method(s) of Labor Recruitment Used

What method(s) of labor recruitment do you use? (Check all that apply).		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Georgia Department of Labor	12.7%	72
Farm Labor Contractor	10.4%	59
Federal H-2A Program (Temporary work program for non-U.S. residents)	3.4%	19
Local Staffing Agency	5.7%	32
Word of Mouth	94.7%	536
Other (please specify)	9.5%	76

Figure 12. Methods of Labor Recruitment Used

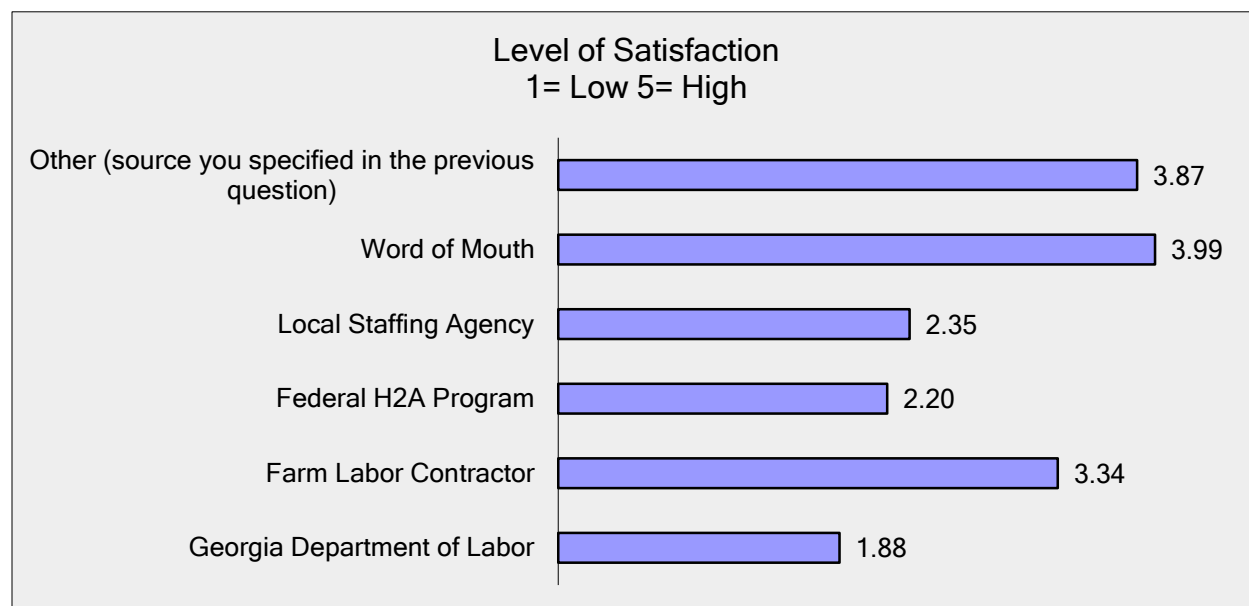


Question 18

Please rate your level of satisfaction when using the following labor recruitment resources with 1 being the lowest level of satisfaction and 5 being the highest level of satisfaction.

For this question, respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction for each recruitment method used and reported in question 17. Respondents were asked to rank different recruitment methods from one to five with one indicating a low level of satisfaction and 5 indicating a high level of satisfaction. Recruiting via word of mouth was rated the highest of the choices with a 3.99 score with other sources of recruitment being second with a 3.87 rating. Farm labor contractors also were given a somewhat favorable rating (3.34) by respondents. The lowest level of satisfaction was with the Georgia Department of Labor at 1.88 and the Federal H-2A program at 2.20. Local staffing agencies were also rated relatively low at 2.35.

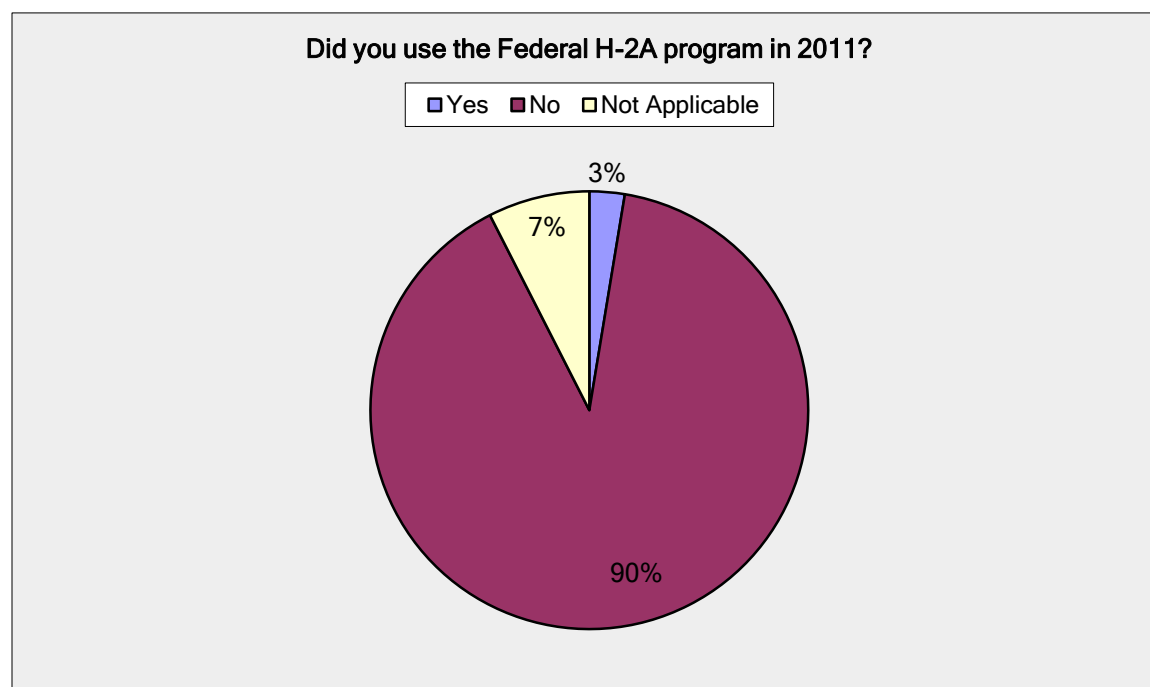
Figure 13. Level of Satisfaction with Different Labor Recruitment Resources



Question 19**Did you use the Federal H-2A program in 2011?**

Question 19 asked respondents to report if they had used the Federal H-2A program to fill their staffing needs in 2011. Of the 586 responses, 89.9 percent (527 responses) said they had not used this program for filling staffing needs in 2011. Only 2.6 percent (15 responses) said they did use this program to fill staffing needs. Figure 13 provides a visual of the responses for this survey question.

Figure 14. Use of the Federal H-2A Program in 2011

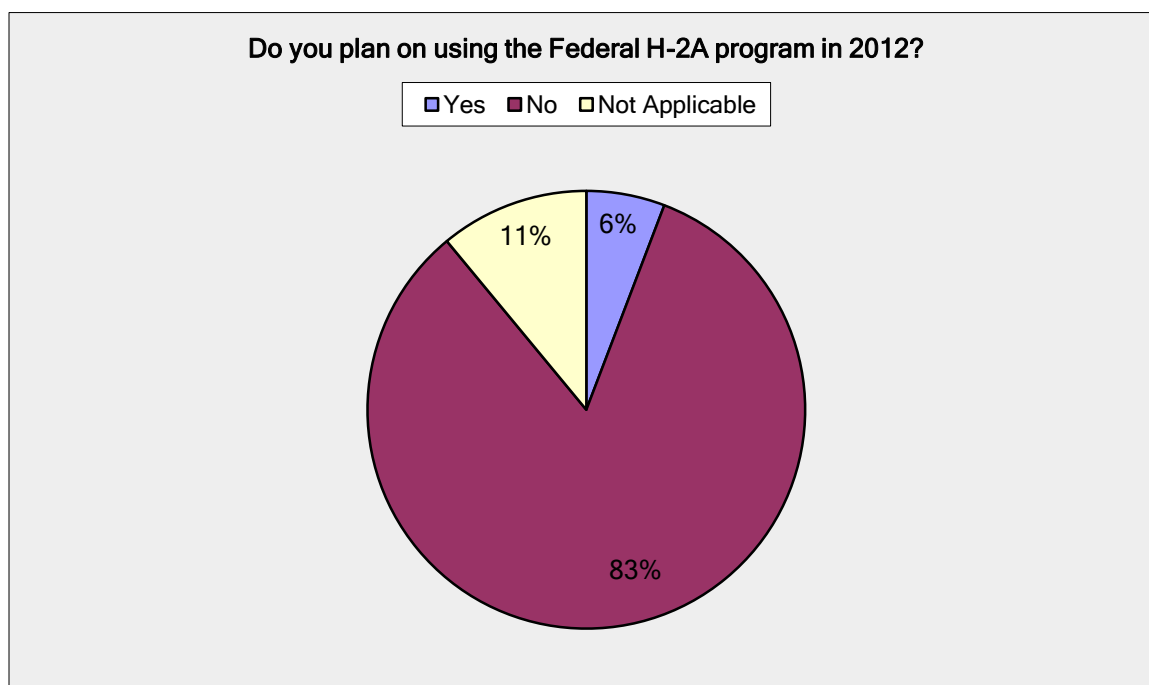


Question 20

Do you plan on using the Federal H-2A program in 2012?

For this question, 83.4 percent of respondents (486) indicated that they do not plan to use the Federal H-2A program to assist with addressing their staffing needs in 2012. Only 34 respondents (5.8 percent) indicated that they would use the H-2A program in 2012.

Figure 15. Planned Use of the Federal H-2A Program in 2012



Question 21

How many years have you used the Federal H-2A program?

This question looked to determine if the level of participation in the Federal H-2A program.

For this question, an overwhelming majority of respondents (94.1 percent) indicated that the question was not applicable to their operation while 2 percent have used the program more than 5 years. Only 1.1 percent have used the program 4 to 5 years and 1.4 percent have used it 2 to 3 years as was the case with respondents using the program for 1 year. In total, only about 6 percent of those surveyed actually use the Federal H-2A program to address their staffing needs.

Table 11. Number of Years Using the Federal H-2A program

How many years have you used the Federal H-2A program?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 year	1.4%	8
2-3 years	1.4%	8
4-5 years	1.1%	6
More than 5 years	2.0%	11
Not Applicable	94.1%	524

Question 22

On average, how many employees have you employed annually with the Federal H-2A program?

The respondents for this question indicated that they employ anywhere from 1 to 100 workers by way of the federal H-2A program. Exactly 2 percent indicated that they employ 10 or fewer employees while an additional 1.1 percent employ between 51 and 100 employees. The same 1.1 percent responded that they employ more than 100 employees and 0.5 percent 11 to 25 employees.

Table 12. Number of Employees Hired Annually with the Federal H-2A program

On average, how many employees have you employed annually with the Federal H-2A program?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-10	2.0%	11
11-25	0.5%	3
26-50	0.9%	5
51-100	1.1%	6
More than 100	1.1%	6
Not Applicable	94.4%	523

Question 23

If you have used the H-2A program in the past, but are no longer using the program, please indicate why

The majority of respondents again indicated this question was not applicable to their operation (91.9 percent). For those who did provide a response, the majority (6.1 percent) reported that they no longer use the Federal H-2A program because the program has excessive paperwork and that it is too expensive (5.2 percent). An additional 3.3 percent said they no longer use the program because workers are not available when needed and 2.9 percent said that local workers were more readily available. Under other, respondents indicated that some have used the H2B program in the past.

Table 13. Reason(s) for No Longer Using the Federal H-2A Program

If you have used the H-2A program in the past, but are no longer using the program, please indicate why		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Program is too expensive	5.2%	28
Program has excessive paperwork/too complicated	6.1%	33
H-2A workers were not available when needed	3.3%	18
Local workers are more readily available	2.9%	16
Not Applicable	91.9%	499
Other (please specify)	3.2%	20

Question 24**If you have never used the Federal H-2A program, please indicate why**

This question was asked to determine reasons why respondents have never participated in the Federal H-2A program. For this question, 40.1 percent said the question was not applicable to their operation. For those who responded otherwise, 26.4 percent indicated that they are not familiar with the H-2A program. An additional 21.8 percent said the program had excessive paperwork or was too complicated and that local workers were more readily available (20.5 percent). An additional 20.5 percent responded that the program was too expensive and 16.5 percent said they had heard negative things about the program from others. Finally, 6.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they have never used the H-2A program because workers are not available when needed. Other responses included participants stating that they have used the H2B program and that they have no interest in working with a federal program.

Table 14. Reason(s) for Never Using the Federal H-2A Program

If you have never used the Federal H-2A program, please indicate why (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Program is too expensive	20.5%	111
Program has excessive paperwork/too complicated	21.8%	118
H-2A workers were not available when needed	6.7%	36
Local workers are more readily available	20.5%	111
I am not familiar with the H-2A program	26.4%	143
I have heard negative things about the program from others	16.5%	89
Not Applicable	40.1%	217
Other	2.7%	23

Question 25

In the current crop year (2011), have you experienced an income loss because of the lack of available workers for your operation?

This question asked participants to disclose if they had experienced a loss of income in 2011 due to the lack of available workers for their operation. Of the 574 responses to this question, 74 percent said no while 26 percent said yes. Additionally, table 15 shows the responses to this question by crop produced.

Figure 16. Number of Respondents who Experienced Income Loss from the Lack of Available Workers in 2011

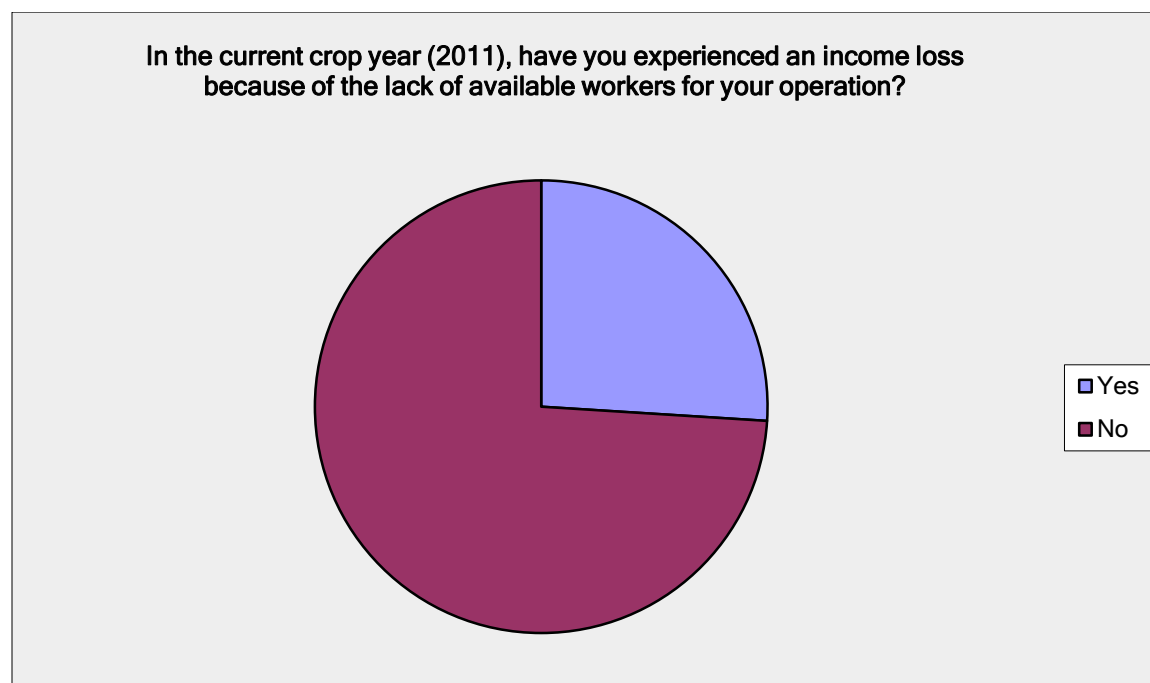


Table 15. Number of Yes Respondents Who Experienced an Income Loss from the Lack of Available Workers in 2011

In the current crop year (2011), have you experienced an income loss because of the lack of available workers for your operation?

Answer Options	Answered Yes/Total Participants in Study by Commodity	Percent Reporting Losses
Apples	2/11	18%
Beef	14/107	13%
Bees/Honey	5/11	45%
Blackberries	11/24	46%
Blueberries	26/50	52%
Broilers	3/20	15%
Cabbage	8/13	62%
Cantaloupe	5/9	56%
Carrots	1/7	14%
Corn	27/151	18%
Cotton	39/205	19%
Cucumbers	11/17	65%
Dairy	6/43	14%
Eggplant	7/11	64%
Eggs	2/5	40%
Equine	0/6	-
Goats	0/8	-
Grapes	1/5	20%

Greens	6/15	40%
Hay	17/97	18%
Hogs	0/10	-
Olives	0/2	-
Onions	4/12	33%
Ornamentals	25/200	13%
Peaches	3/16	19%
Peanuts	36/204	18%
Pecans	10/58	17%
Peppers	10/16	63%
Rye	5/36	14%
Sheep	1/5	20%
Snap Beans	7/15	47%
Southern Peas	5/12	42%
Soybeans	14/82	17%
Squash	14/21	67%
Strawberries	5/16	31%
Timber	17/83	20%
Tobacco	7/11	64%
Tomatoes	6/23	26%
Turfgrass	19/67	28%
Watermelon	12/24	50%
Wheat	11/82	13%
Zucchini	8/18	44%

Question 26

If yes to the previous question, please estimate the value of the loss you experienced?

This question asked respondents to estimate the value of the income loss due to lack of available workers in 2011. Again, a majority (70.6 percent) indicated that this question was not applicable to their operation. For those who did find it applicable, 7.8 percent reported an estimated loss between \$10,001 and \$24,999. Another 7.6 percent reported estimated losses between \$75,000 and \$99,999 and 5.4 percent estimated losses between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Another 17 respondents estimated losses of more than \$100,000 (3.8 percent) with two respondents estimating losses in excess of \$1 million for 2011. Additional responses are listed in table 16.

Table 16. Estimated Value of Economic Loss due to Lack of Available Workers

If yes to the previous question, please estimate the value of the loss you experienced		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than \$10,000	3.4%	15
\$10,001-\$24,999	7.8%	35
\$25,000-\$49,999	5.4%	24
\$50,000-\$74,999	5.2%	23
\$75,000-\$99,999	7.6%	34
Not Applicable	70.6%	315
More than \$100,000 (please write in the estimated amount)	3.8%	17

Question 27

Under ideal weather conditions, when your primary commodity matures how quickly should it be harvested/processed so that loss or damage can be avoided?

This question examined the timeliness of harvesting for respondents. The majority of respondents reported that their commodity can be harvested during a period of longer than 7 days (63.5 percent) and 24.9 percent indicated that their commodity must be harvested immediately. Additional responses are found in Table 17.

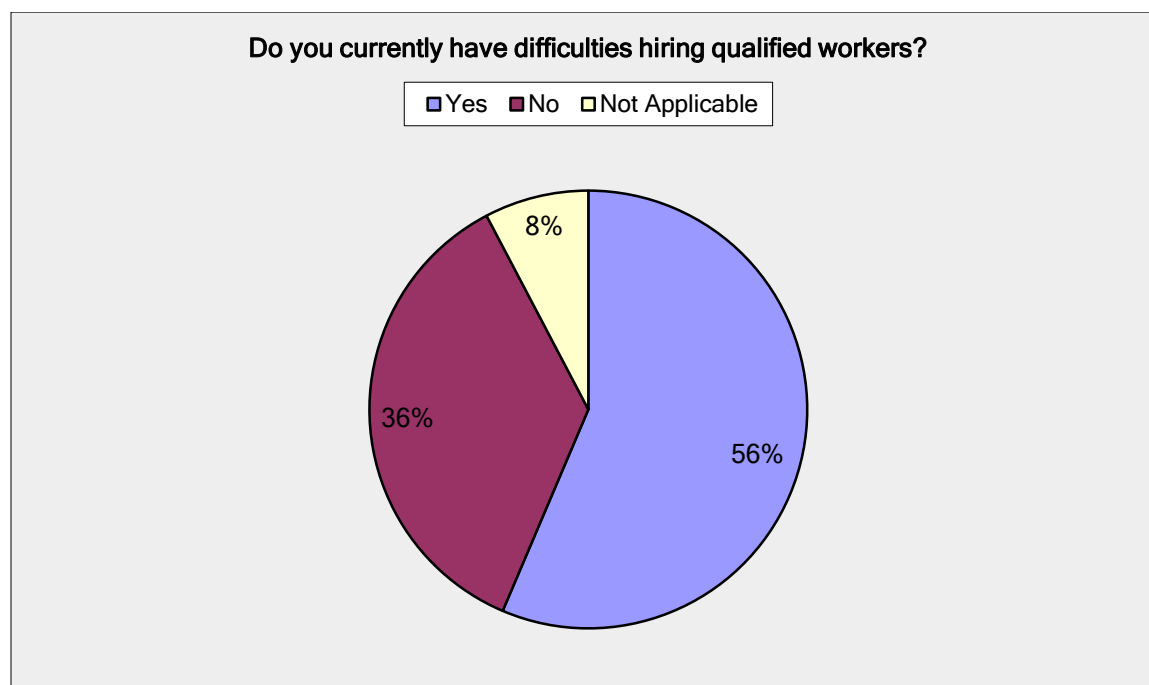
Table 17. When Commodity Needs Harvesting

Under ideal weather conditions, when your primary commodity matures how quickly should it be harvested/processed so that loss or damage can be avoided?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Commodity must be harvested/processed immediately	24.9%	96
Commodity must be harvested/processed within 2-3 days	13.5%	52
Commodity must be harvested/processed within 4-7 days	13.5%	52
Commodity can be harvested/processed during a period longer than 7 days	63.5%	245
Other (please specify)	14.7%	77

Question 28**Do you currently have difficulties hiring qualified workers?**

This question asks survey participants to state if they have difficulties hiring qualified workers for their operation. For this question, 585 responses were collected with 56.4 percent (330) stating that they do experience difficulties in hiring qualified workers. The other 35.9 percent stated that they do not have difficulties hiring workers and 7.7 percent responded to the question as not applicable to their operation.

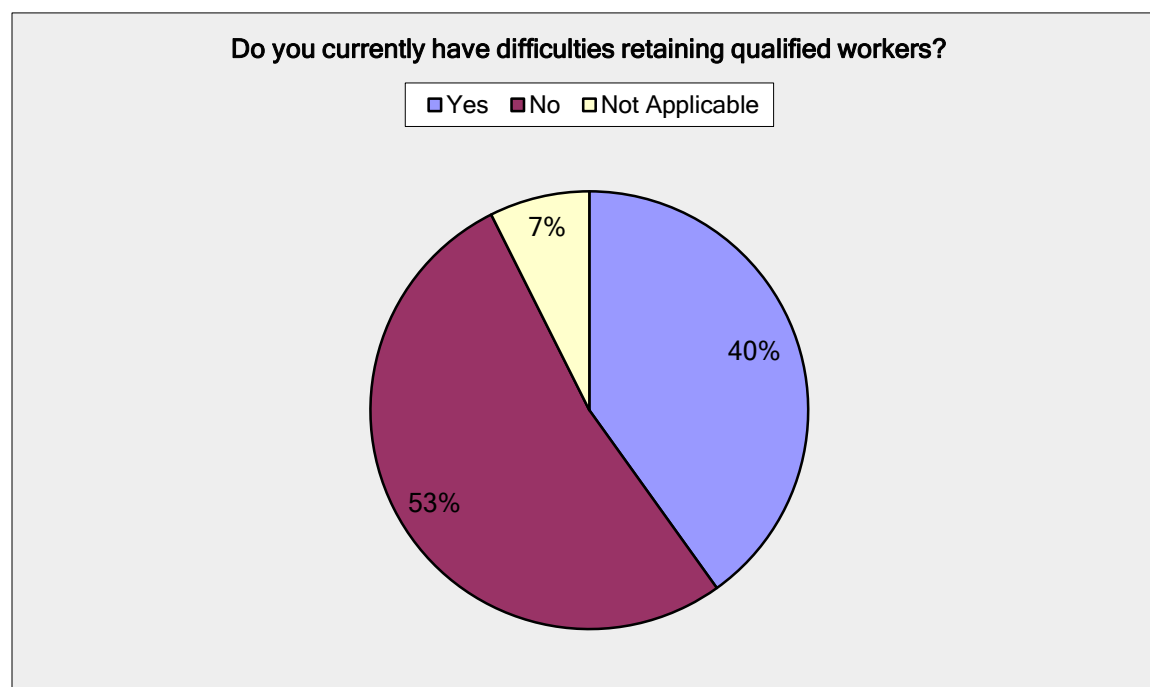
Figure 17. Level of Difficulty in Hiring Qualified Workers



Question 29**Do you currently have difficulties retaining qualified workers?**

This question builds on question 28 and asks respondents to state if they have trouble retaining qualified workers. For this question, 581 responses were recorded with 52.5 percent (305) stating that they do not have difficulties retaining qualified workers while 40.1 percent (233) reported having difficulties retaining qualified workers. Another 7.4 percent answered not applicable to this question.

Figure 18. Level of Difficulty in Retaining Qualified Workers



Question 30

Please rate the level of difficulty you have in hiring qualified workers

This question asked respondents to rate the level of difficulty they have in hiring qualified workers. A scale of 1 to 5 was used with 1 being not difficult and 5 being very difficult. A majority of respondents ranked their level of difficulty as 3 with the average rating being 3.13. Complete responses are seen in table 18.

Table 18. Level of difficulty in hiring qualified workers

Please rate the level of difficulty you have in hiring qualified workers (with 1 being not difficult and 5 being very difficult)							
Answer Options	1-Not Difficult	2	3	4	5-Very Difficult	Rating Average	Response Count
Please check one	101(18%)	78 (14%)	141(25%)	131(23%)	110(20%)	3.13	561

Question 31

Please rate the level of difficulty you have in retaining qualified workers

This question asked about the level of difficulty respondents have in retaining qualified workers. Again, a scale of 1 to 5 was used with 1 being not difficult and 5 being very difficult. A majority of respondents ranked their level of difficulty as 1 with the average rating being 2.61. Complete responses are seen in table 19.

Table 19. Level of difficulty in retaining qualified workers

Please rate the level of difficulty you have in retaining qualified workers (with 1 being not difficult and 5 being very difficult)							
Answer Options	1-Not Difficult	2	3	4	5-Very Difficult	Rating Average	Response Count
Please check one	161 (29%)	109 (20%)	132(24%)	90 (16%)	63 (11%)	2.61	555

Question 32

What is/are the major reason(s) for hiring difficulties? If you do not have difficulties, please put not applicable.

Complete responses for this question can be found in Appendix F. A major response theme for this question was that the work is too physically demanding and difficult for U.S. Citizens (non-immigrants). Respondents believe that only immigrant workers are willing to do the tasks needed in their operations. An additional theme is that respondents believe that it is difficult to find qualified and trained workers to aid in their operation.

Question 33

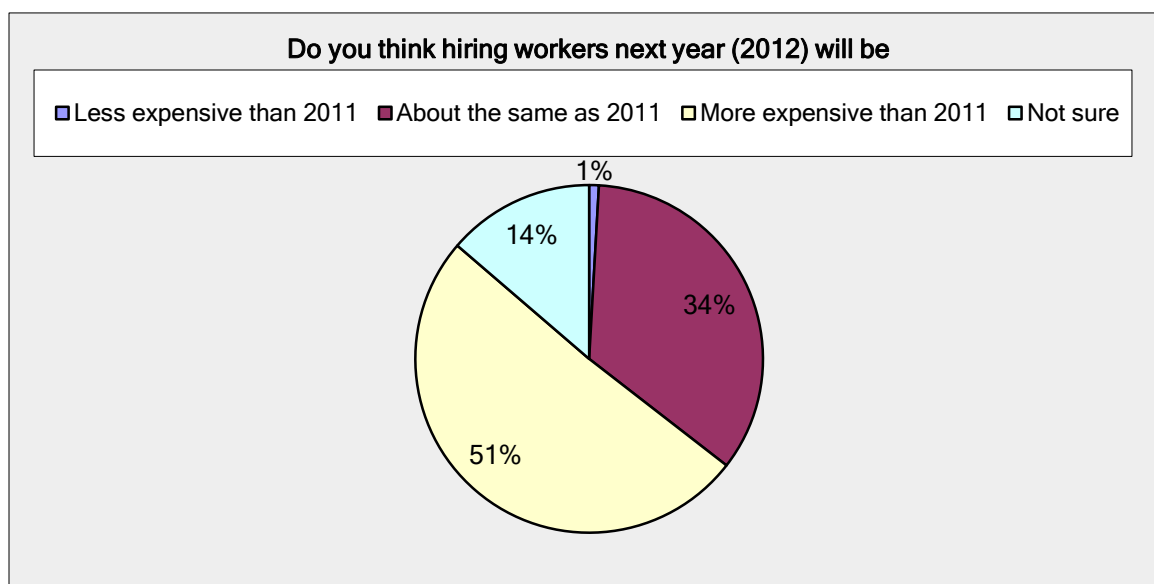
Do you think hiring workers next year (2012) will be: less expensive than 2011, about the same as 2011, more expensive than 2011 or not sure.

For this question, over half (50.8 percent) of the respondents believe that hiring workers will be more expensive in 2012. Another 34.6 percent believe the cost of hiring workers will be about the same as it was in 2011. Less than 1 percent believe that the cost of hiring workers will be less in 2012 and 13.7 percent are not sure. Exactly 200 respondents explained their responses and provided thoughts on this question. The major theme with these responses was that costs will increase due to the rising cost of living and other related factors. The complete responses can be seen in Appendix G.

Table 20. Comparison of estimated cost of hiring workers in 2012 versus actual 2011 costs

Do you think hiring workers next year (2012) will be _____.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less expensive than 2011	0.9%	5
About the same as 2011	34.6%	195
More expensive than 2011	50.8%	286
Not sure	13.7%	77
Briefly explain		200

Figure 19. Predicted Cost of Hiring Workers in 2012



Question 34

Please rate your level of interest in hiring a legal workforce (one would indicate a low level of interest and 5 would indicate a high level of interest)

Respondents showed a high level of interest in hiring a legal workforce with 66.8 percent responding with a 5 rating. Only 11.1 percent responded with a ranking of 1. The average numerical response for this question was 4.19. Again, respondents were given the opportunity to explain their responses and a complete list of these are in Appendix H.

Table 21. Level of Interest in Hiring a Legal Workforce

Please rate your level of interest in hiring a legal workforce (one would indicate a low level of interest and 5 would indicate a high level of interest)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-Low	11.1%	61
2	2.5%	14
3	9.3%	51
4	10.3%	57
5-High	66.8%	368
Briefly explain		221

Question 35

What concerns do you have about hiring a legal workforce on your farm/operation for the upcoming season?

This open-ended question gives respondents the opportunity to share concerns they might have about hiring a legal workforce for their operation in the upcoming growing season. Complete responses are seen in Appendix I.

Question 36

Please take this opportunity to provide us with any additional comments about immigration reform in Georgia as it pertains to your operation/industry.

Again, this open-ended question allows respondents to share any additional comments about immigration reform as it pertains to their operations. Complete responses are seen in Appendix J.

E. Major Findings and Conclusions

Major Finding One

Relative to the study, the respondents represented a variety of agricultural operations ranging from beef cattle production to large scale row crop production (corn, cotton, peanuts, soybeans, etc.) to specialty crops (blueberries, apples, peaches, carrots, cabbage, watermelon, etc.) and various nursery/greenhouse operations. Many professionals in the agricultural service industries were also represented. These included lawn and turf care professionals, commodity packing operations and others. The responses in this study showed that cotton, peanuts and ornamental crops were the most financially important to growers and the industry, which is consistent with statistics found in the USDA Economic Research Service State Fact Sheet for Georgia. USDA research placed peanuts, cotton and the greenhouse/nursery industry in the top 5 of Georgia commodities (based on value of receipts).

The study provides a good representation of Georgia agriculture with a broad representation of commodities as well as a diverse farm size. Also, the study obtained responses from 138 of the 159 counties in Georgia. Additionally, responses from large and small operations were well represented in the study. Approximately 30 percent of respondents indicated that their operations annual gross income was in excess of \$1 million annually. Likewise, approximately 40 percent of the respondents listed their annual gross income at \$250,000 or less.

Major Finding Two

Regarding the number of full and part-time employees hired, 21 percent of respondents indicated that fewer than average were hired in 2011 when compared to the last five years. Respondents stated that a poor economy, loss of revenue, poor worker retention, and lack of workers were major reasons for hiring fewer workers in 2011. It is unknown if the lack of full and part-time workers in 2011 was a direct result of the passage of Georgia HB87, however, the findings of this study suggest that this could be an issue. At the very least, this study identifies a perception that the lack of workers could be related to the passage of Georgia HB87. This is especially evident with several survey respondents that indicated that part-time workers were not available due to the new immigration law.

Major Finding Three

With regards to wages and job function, all of the respondents reported paying their full and part-time workers at or above the federal minimum wage. Several respondents paid well above minimum wage with some paying as high as \$15 per hour or more. Job functions are varied with a majority of full and part-time workers performing field labor work. In addition, many full and part-time workers are listed as performing landscaping and lawn maintenance work.

Major Finding Four

Most respondents indicated that they use word of mouth to recruit workers. Approximately 13 percent use the Georgia Department of Labor and only 3.4 percent reported using the Federal H-2A program.

The respondents also ranked different recruitment methods from 1 to 5 with one being a low level of satisfaction and 5 being a high level of satisfaction. For this question, the word of mouth recruiting method was the most favorable with an average response of 3.99 on a five-point scale.

The least favorable recruiting methods were the Georgia Department of Labor (1.88) and the Federal H-2A program (2.2). The respondents did not indicate why they have a low level of satisfaction with the Georgia Department of Labor for recruitment of workers. Further study could examine the Georgia Department of Labor recruitment program and the lower level seen in this study.

Many respondents felt the H-2A program was too expensive and too complicated. Over 26 percent of respondents were not familiar with the Federal H-2A program and almost 17 percent said they had heard negative things about the H-2A program. Additionally, 40.1 percent of respondents stated that the H-2A program was not applicable to their operation; such operations include but are not limited to dairy, cotton ginning, and green industry. Over 20 percent reported that local workers were more readily available. These findings strongly suggest several things about the H-2A program. First, these findings suggest that more outreach and education be provided to growers about the H-2A program and that the federal H-2A program might need to be evaluated and revamped to ensure greater use. Responses suggest that the current H-2A program is too complicated and that most growers would rather hire local workers when possible. The findings suggest that a program to provide assistance to growers wishing to use the H-2A program should also be considered. This program should help improve the perception of the H-2A program and provide growers with assistance as they submit applications for workers.

Major Finding Five

Discovered in the survey, 26 percent of respondents reported a loss of income due to the lack of available workers. Although only 26 percent reported losses, these losses were estimated to be in excess of \$10 million. Upon examination of those reporting losses and their commodity, data suggests those in the fruit and vegetable industry experienced the greatest losses. Specifically, over 50 percent of the producers of blueberries, cabbage, cantaloupe, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, squash, tobacco, and watermelon reported income losses in 2011 due to lack of available workers. The survey data suggests a trend that growers producing labor intensive commodities are experiencing a greater loss of income due to the lack of available workers. Further study to confirm this is recommended.

IV. H-2A Issues

According to the Georgia Department of Labor (“GDOL”), Georgia currently has thirty-three producers participating in the H-2A guest worker program. In 2008, the United States Department of Labor (“USDOL”) found that the majority of U.S. growers believed “the H-2A program [was] so plagued with problems that they avoid using it altogether.” Similarly, Georgia producers have mixed reviews on the merits of the program, and the majority of the issues cited require action at the federal level to solve.

Currently, the USDOL administers the H-2A guest worker program. The program is only available to producers with work needs of a temporary or seasonal nature, who anticipate a shortage of domestic workers to perform these agricultural-specific jobs. Due to the year round nature of some industries within agriculture, this provision prohibits those, specifically the dairy, livestock, poultry, and ginning industries, from being eligible. By expanding the eligibility requirements, more producers could potentially fill their respective labor needs by signing up for H-2A or the proposed H-2C program.

Producers often cite the burdensome and cumbersome regulations in addition to the high costs associated with using H-2A as problems; some claim costs prohibit them from using the program and opting for potentially illegal workers. Some costs are buried within program requirements and add up quickly while other costs are associated with compliance i.e. fines, penalties, etc. Some producers point to the four federal agencies involved in H-2A that rarely ensure workers arrive as scheduled as a reason for not using the program.

H-2A users consistently complain about the “fifty percent rule” which requires growers to hire domestic applicants until fifty percent of the H-2A contract has lapsed. In addition to balancing the timely need of harvesting, farmers must hire every domestic worker sent from GDOL interested in the work associated with each H-2A contract. An onion grower in Collins, Georgia testified to the difficulties saying that “the [fifty percent] rule allows for unqualified workers [who are] not prepared or physically able to pick onions for 8-12 hours a day are sent to my farm. They walk off a majority of the time in the first hour, so I have to plan not only for the needed H-2A workers, but also budget to hire domestic workers who will come and go sporadically throughout my harvest season.” Guaranteeing to offer work for seventy-five percent of the approved work contract also adds to the employer’s costs. Even if Mother Nature cooperates, the workload may still vary depending on workforce size and arrival which makes guaranteeing any amount of work very difficult.

Another burdensome requirement is caused by the adverse effect wage rate (AEWR) for employers using H-2A workers. Mandating a premium wage to ensure that U.S. workers are not being adversely affected by guest workers complicates the H-2A program, but a prevailing wage, which is geographically and job specific, similar to the H-2B program could simplify the program. The purpose of the AEWR is to not adversely affect domestic workers, so the H-2A employer must pay both domestic and foreign guest workers the AEWR set by USDOL each year. This wage rate varies from \$8.97 to \$12.01 per hour; Georgia’s AEWR recently increased three percent from \$9.12 to \$9.30 per hour. Additionally, the bureaucratic red tape associated with the program forces most producers to contract with an outside

firm to manage the onerous paperwork. One producer reiterated the difficulties with H-2A stating, “My wife spent two months on our application and we were told the wage would be \$9.11 an hour. Within a week of turning our application in, the rate was raised to \$9.12 an hour causing our entire application to be rejected. The logical response would have been for us to amend our application instead we had to start over, and to top it off, our workers were late.” As a result of the cumbersome and arduous application process, the government has created a program so difficult to use that the obstacles significantly limit wide scale utilization.

Moving from a labor certification process to a labor attestation process would streamline the process for users. USDOL issues labor certifications after the labor market has been tested through job orders, advertisement of jobs, and employer reports of efforts to obtain domestic workers. The process also includes verified protections, such as housing inspections, of domestic workers. This process does not include confirmation that employers appropriately searched for domestic workers. The labor attestation process occurs when an employer self-certifies that the labor market has been tested and domestic workers are unavailable to fill the needed jobs. Labor attestation proposals institute strict penalties for producers not complying with the rules as well as provide protection for domestic workers. One grower suggests that the reason illegal workers are considered the more viable option is due to these hidden and excessive costs.

Transportation and housing costs are additional, prescribed expenses within the H-2A program. H-2A workers by definition must be temporary, and housing for the temporary guest workers must be free to the guest worker. One producer asked, “Why should I have to provide housing for my immigrant workers? I am not required to provide housing for my American workers.” H-2A is the only temporary guest worker program that requires housing, and this provision ultimately keeps some producers from utilizing the program. Additionally, the H-2A regulations provide that a grower must reimburse an H-2A worker for the transportation costs from the worker’s home to the place of employment only if the worker completes fifty percent of the work contract period or earlier.

Finally, one of the severe costs and threats to H-2A employers is that from the LSC. Producers consistently cite frivolous lawsuits as an obstacle with participating in the program. One Tift County producer shared a tactic used by LSC. “I have had attractive women come on to my property, without my permission to try and talk my workers into suing me, that is not right that my tax dollars are going to fund activities like that”. Another producer in South Georgia was cited for broken screen doors and beds pushed together although the guest workers actually moved the beds themselves. A few Georgia producers have joined together to maximize work schedules of available workers and minimize exposure to legal action.

V. Proposed Federal Legislation Addressing Agriculture Labor

For years, Congress has considered a wide range of proposals to address the problems associated with H-2A. Currently, there are several bills under consideration, but the most relevant to a guest worker program specifically for agriculture will be compared and contrasted below.

- Helping Agriculture Receive Verifiable Employees Securely and Temporarily (HARVEST) Act 2011 authored by Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) and was introduced on July 19, 2011.
- American Specialty Agriculture Act of 2011 authored by Representative Lamar Smith (R-TX) introduced on September 7, 2011.
- Legal Agricultural Workforce Act (LAWA) authored Representative Dan Lungren (R-CA) introduced on September 12, 2011.
- The Agriculture Labor Market Reform Act authored by Representative Howard Berman (D-CA) introduced on September 22, 2011.
- Better Agriculture Resources Now (BARN) Act of 2011 authored by Representative Jack Kingston (R-GA) and Representative Lynn Westmoreland (R-GA) introduced on November 16, 2011.

Helping Agriculture Receive Verifiable Employees Securely and Temporarily (HARVEST) Act July 19, 2011

Senator Chambliss has introduced a bipartisan bill aimed at expanding, streamlining, and reforming the existing H-2A non-immigrant program to meet the present needs of agriculture. For border states with unique labor needs, the HARVEST Act of 2011 makes policy changes impacting daily border crossers working in the agricultural industry.

In an attempt to alleviate the administrative burden on the producer, the HARVEST Act makes strategic changes to the H-2A application process. The proposal calls for the program to be administered by USDA as opposed to USDOL. The proposal also calls for a labor attestation process instead of the current labor certification process. If the U.S. Secretary of Labor certifies an adequate number of domestic workers exist to fill agricultural jobs in a particular state, the process reverts back to a labor certification process, again administered by the USDA. The HARVEST Act addresses the fifty percent rule while protecting the U.S. worker. The employer must hire all qualified and willing domestic workers; this recruitment period ends the first day of the H-2A contract.

As for housing and transportation costs, the employer provides a housing allowance as opposed to providing free housing; the employer also is no longer required to provide housing if the worker lives outside commuting distance. Reimbursement of transportation costs correlates with the contract.

Once fifty percent of the work period is complete, transportation costs from the consulate to the job will be reimbursed; similarly, upon completion of the entire contract, return transportation costs will be reimbursed.

The HARVEST Act focuses on the temporary status of the worker, not the temporary status of seasonal harvesting. An employee spends up to ten months in the United States working in the agricultural industry and two months out of the country, maintaining temporary status. There is no limitation on the number of applications an employer can file in order to retain an adequate workforce to meet the operation's year-round needs. For current undocumented workers, the HARVEST Act provides an opportunity to apply for a one time waiver for H-2A admission at a U.S. Consulate outside of the U. S. with a \$500 fine. Once H-2A status is granted, the worker receives a biometric identification card.

In response to the frustration with LSC, the HARVEST Act makes it explicitly clear that the employment of the worker is for the mutual benefit of the worker and the employer. Additionally, prior to litigation, either party can request mediation and the results of that effort will be admissible in court.

American Specialty Agriculture Act September 7, 2011

Congressman Lamar Smith has introduced the ASA Act which eliminates the problems plaguing the H-2A program and institutes an H-2C program that will be responsive to the needs of America's specialty growers. Similar to Senator Chambliss's HARVEST Act, the ASA Act transfers the H-2C program to USDA, expands eligibility, removes the fifty percent rule, and allows for either housing or a housing voucher.

The ASA Act reduces the growers' work guarantee for the H-2C program to a more reasonable fifty percent of the work contract as opposed to seventy-five percent. As for transportation costs, ASA Act ensures that a grower only reimburse an H-2C worker for the transportation costs from the worker's home to the place of employment if the worker completes fifty percent of the work contract period.

The ASA Act addresses potential frivolous litigation abuse by allowing growers to include binding arbitration and mediation in contracts with H-2C workers. The bill also, provides that the federally-funded LSC may not sue a grower on behalf of an H-2C worker unless mediation has been attempted through the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. In addition, the LSC cannot provide legal assistance to a former H-2C worker who is no longer present in the United States.

The ASA Act also states that a guest worker may only be in the states for ten months. To ensure that the employee returns home, no family members are allowed to enter the United States. Growers must petition for H-2C workers and must promptly alert the Department of Homeland Security if workers have abandoned employment. The Department shall remove any H-2C workers who violate the terms of their status.

Legal Agricultural Workforce Act

September 12, 2011

The Legal Agricultural Workforce Act does not seek to re-tool and re-write the rules for the H-2A program, and therefore, Congressman Lungren's bill does not affect the H-2A program in its current form. Lungren's Legal Agricultural Workforce Act, LAWA, establishes a nonimmigrant agricultural worker visa program to allow agricultural workers into the United States for a 10 month period. Similar to the HARVEST Act, the guest worker must return their home country for two months before returning to the United States. The agriculture visa would be known as the "W" visa category. The "W" visa program would be established by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Homeland Security. The Secretary of Agriculture works with farmers to determine the number of "W" visas needed each month. The Secretary of Homeland Security is then notified of the number of "W" visas needed. Before a producer can fill a job with a "W" visa worker, it must be attempted to be filled with an American worker and placed on the Department of Labor's Electronic Job Registry. On the DOL's Job Registry a description of the period for which agricultural workers will be needed, as well as the wages and working conditions are required. Proof of this is required to be granted any "W" visas. The Department of Homeland Security would be required to provide any "W" workers with a biometric visa card. These workers are required to be continuously employed in agriculture or actively seeking to stay in the United States. A key component of the legislation allows producers to request specific "W" workers by name. This ensures the producer receives an experienced worker. If a producer does not follow the rules and regulations of the program, that producer can be expelled from using the "W" visa.

Agriculture Labor Market Reform Act

September 22, 2011

The Agriculture Labor Market Reform Act of 2011 was introduced by Congressman Howard Berman on September 22, 2011. The bill provides the agricultural industry with a stable, legal and reliable workforce which is critical to the long-term health of the Agricultural industry in America. The proposed legislation accomplishes this by stabilizing the current workforce by providing earned adjustment of status to experienced unauthorized illegal immigrants and their families. To prevent any future illegal entry for agricultural employment, the bill immediately requires farm labor contractors to use the E-Verify program within six months of the bill becoming law. Berman's legislation seeks to reform the labor market by enforcing labor standards in agriculture as well as the promotion of modern labor management practices among agricultural employers. Finally, the legislation ends the incentives under the H-2A program which lead employers to prefer guest workers over Americans.

This bill allows for a guest worker to achieve "blue card status" during the 24-month period ending on December 31, 2010 if he or she has performed specified lengths of, or earned a specified amount from, agricultural employment in the United States. The guest worker must also apply for the "blue card status" during the 18-month application period. Status is granted if the guest worker is otherwise admissible to the United States and has not been convicted of specified felonies or misdemeanors. The bill limits the number of "blue cards" issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security to 1,000,000 during

the first five years. The bill allows for an immigrant to go from blue card status to that of a lawful immigrant for permanent residence if the Secretary determines the immigrant has worked in agriculture for at least five years, with at least 100 days per year or working in agriculture for three years with 150 days of work per year.

The bill also sets the rules for termination of “blue card status”. These penalties include permanent expulsion from the program and deportation. It provides for adjustment of blue card status to permanent resident status based upon completed periods of agricultural employment and a clean background. It does exempt an illegal immigrant from certain Social Security-related violations if committed prior to receiving blue card status. The bill amends the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to require farm labor contractors to participate in the E-verify Program. It also amends the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act to prohibit farm labor contractors from hiring an immigrant who is not lawfully admitted for permanent residence or who has not been otherwise authorized by the Secretary of Homeland Security (DHS) to work.

Better Agriculture Resources Now Act (BARN)

November 16, 2011

Congressman Kingston has introduced the Better Agriculture Resources Now Act in November 2011 which reforms the current H-2A program. Like other proposals, the BARN Act transfers the H-2A program from USDOL to USDA, expands eligibility, removes the fifty percent rule, and allows for either housing or a housing voucher.

The BARN Act allows employers to list in detail experience requirements on the H-2A request for workers. The proposal includes a new farm wage methodology based at a minimum of 115 percent of federal, state, or local minimum wage, whichever is higher. Furthermore, it reduces the application period from forty-five to thirty days which allows producers more flexibility in determining their labor needs more accurately. To address the slow turnaround time with H-2A applications, the BARN Act allows for any application without a response during a thirty day period to be automatically approved. This expedited approval only applies to the USDOL.

As other proposals emphasize, the BARN Act creates a method for maintaining the “guest” aspect of a guest worker program. It creates a one year H-2A visa renewable only once. If a work contract is granted for longer than one year, the employer must advertise and recruit domestic workers. If a H-2A worker does not have work for a period of sixty days, the H-2A visa is not valid. At the end of the second year of work, the worker must return home for two months before being eligible again.

Addressing the issues with the LSC, the BARN Act prohibits legal activism unless the worker is present. The legislation also prohibits bringing civil action unless the counterparties have attempted mediation, entering an employer’s property without pre-arranged appointments, and requires respect of the arbitration process and outcome if the employer and employee have an existing arbitration arrangement.

VI. Current State Agriculture Labor Initiatives

After recognizing problems with the current guest worker program, the GDOL is working on ways to improve the current H-2A process for the agricultural community as a precaution if federal regulations remain unchanged. These options include agriculture seminars across the state designed to inform the public on recruitment options, updating the Prevailing Common and Normal Practices Survey, as well as the installation of an Interstate and Intrastate Guest Worker Program.

After hearing from producers in June 2011, GDOL worked with various producers and associations to post jobs and place unemployed domestic workers in the specific roles. With new vision, GDOL seeks to send more qualified and experienced workers to farms as an ongoing effort.

At every listening session, producers expressed great concern with the quality of work from domestic workers. A Vidalia onion producer from Collins, Georgia provided data depicting his experiences. According to his data, a migrant worker was twice as productive as a non-migrant worker in planting Vidalia onions. (See Appendix 4: Collins, Georgia Planting and Harvesting Contract Comparison)

In preparation for updating the Prevailing and Common Practices guidelines, GDOL plans to solicit feedback from producers beginning in 2012. The information gathered will be crucial in meeting the needs of Georgia's farmers.

When there are insufficient agricultural workers in a local area, GDOL can assist employers by using intrastate orders to recruit workers throughout Georgia. This will aid farmers by allowing seasonal workers to move throughout the different regions of the state according to crop production and harvest needs. Throughout the year, the migration pattern suggests that farmworkers will be available for work in South Georgia throughout the summer months then move to north Georgia as the summer crops are harvested.

The process begins no less than thirty days before the work start date. The local career center staff assists the employer in completing the intrastate clearance order and submits it to GDOL Agricultural Services for processing. Upon approval, career center staff throughout the state will recruit and refer workers to the employer until the work start date or the number of desired workers is hired. Placements are processed by the employer's local career center until workers arrive at the jobsite.

As with H-2A, employers must provide housing that meets regulations for workers from outside the local commuting area. Additionally, GDOL performs field checks to ensure employers honor all terms and conditions of the hiring agreement. The State Monitor Advocate, whose role is to protect the migrant worker, will ensure the rights of migrant seasonal farmworkers are protected.

An additional recruitment option lies within an Interstate Guest worker program. Agribusinesses may use interstate orders to recruit workers from other states. No less than forty-five days before the work start date, GDOL career center staff assists the employer in completing the interstate clearance order.

Once GDOL's Agricultural Services approves the order for interstate distribution, USDOL's Regional Office in Atlanta must grant approval.

Although the USDOL determines which states will receive the job order, the workers will most likely come from Texas and Arizona based upon migration patterns provided by GDOL. The employer's local career center oversees placement until the workers arrive at the jobsite and begin working.

As with intrastate orders and H-2A job orders, employers must provide housing. GDOL performs field checks to ensure employers fulfill the terms and conditions of the hiring agreement. The State Monitor Advocate makes sure the rights of migrant seasonal farmworkers are protected. A soft launch of both the interstate and the intrastate recruitment programs is set for January 2012.

After hearing from Georgia farmers that there was a need for farm laborers in June 2011, the Department of Corrections (DOC) placed an emphasis on connecting the 26,000 unemployed probationers statewide with local producers facing labor shortages. The benefit to farmers includes an available workforce and a possible Work Opportunity Tax Credit pending reauthorization in Congress.

According to the DOC, one in thirteen Georgians is incarcerated, on probation, or on parole. By hiring an unemployed probationer or parolee, employers qualify for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WTOC) which can be as much as \$2,400. The tax credit is based on qualified wages paid to the new hire for the first-year of employment. Generally, qualified wages are capped at \$6,000. The credit is 25 percent of qualified first-year wages for those employed at least 120 hours, and 40 percent for those employed 400 hours or more.

By working with GDOL and the Department, DOC was able to identify two producers willing to participate in a pilot program specifically aimed at harvesting. In Sumter County, as many as 17 probationers worked to harvest cucumbers and squash. Further south in Colquitt County, as many as 16 probationers harvested squash.

After evaluating the successes and weaknesses of the pilot programs, DOC's now sees the potential in moving offenders from the farming operations to the transitional centers in the agrarian areas of the state. The Georgia Correctional Institute operates six farms totaling 14,000 acres, and three processing facilities – dairy, canning, and meat. The products produced include beef, pork, milk, eggs, vegetables (20+ varieties), and a variety of row crops. DOC also operates 13 Transition Centers located throughout the state. Each center houses approximately 200 offenders and aids in transitioning the offender back into society. While living at the transition centers the offenders attend programming and also seek employment with area businesses in an effort to become productive citizens. Several centers currently have working relationships within the poultry industry while other centers have offenders who are available to work in the agriculture industry. Placing offenders familiar with farming operations in a transitional facility where they can partner with local agricultural producers would provide another option for Georgia farmers in need of farm labor.

VII. Additional State Immigration Legislation and Initiatives

Tennessee

H1378 Lawful Employment Act (06/07/2011) replaces the present law provisions prohibiting any person from knowingly employing an illegal immigrant. This law instead prohibits an employer from knowingly employing an unauthorized immigrant or using a contract, subcontract, independent contractor agreement or other such contract or agreement to obtain the labor of an unauthorized immigrant. It requires each employer to enroll and maintain active participation in the E-Verify program before October 1, 2011.

Florida

Executive Order 11-02 (1/4/2011) required all state agencies, contractors and subcontractors to use E-Verify. Executive Order 11-116 supersedes EO 11-02. It requires all state agencies to use E-Verify and specifies that contractors and subcontractors who have contracts “for the provision of goods and services to the state in excess of nominal value” must also use the program. All other employers are encouraged to use E-Verify. Effective May 27, 2011.

Alabama

HB56 Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act (June 9, 2011), This law addresses a range of topics including law enforcement, employment, education, public benefits, harbor/transport/rental housing, voting and REAL ID. It prohibits and provides penalties for: the entry, presence, and involvement in economic activity of unauthorized immigrants, employment, voting and registration activities, and access to public benefits. Public contractors and subcontractors are required to use E-Verify. The bill provides penalties for crimes dealing in false identification documents and identity fraud. Public schools (K-12) are required to determine a student's immigration status and submit annual reports to the state education board. The law bans illegal immigrants from attending college or receiving any state scholarships, grants, or financial aid. It is unlawful for a person to transport an immigrant; conceal, harbor or shield an alien; or harbor an alien unlawfully present by entering into a rental agreement if the person knows or recklessly disregards the fact the alien is unlawfully present. Portions of this bill are pending legal action.

Utah

H497 Illegal Immigration Enforcement Act (03/15/2011) This act addresses law enforcement, REAL ID and public benefits. The law requires that an officer verify the immigration status of a person arrested for a felony or a class A misdemeanor and a person booked for class B or C misdemeanors. It clarifies when passengers in a vehicle where the operator has been detained may also be questioned and their immigration status verified. It requires verification of immigration status regarding application for public services or benefits provided by a state or local governmental agency or subcontractor, except as

exempted by federal law. This bill does not implement or authorize the federal REAL ID Act to any extent not currently provided by state law.

Utah Guest Worker Program Act

This law establishes a temporary guest worker program and seeks federal waivers to implement the program by July 1, 2013, or within 120 days of receiving a federal waiver, whichever is sooner. The law requires implementation to be consistent with federal immigration law, civil rights, and privileges and immunities of U.S. citizens. To be eligible for a guest worker permit, individuals must be older than 18 or have parent or guardian permission; have worked or lived in Utah before May 10, 2011; provide regularly updated contact information; provide proof of work within 30 days of permit issuance; agree to a criminal background check, and not have been convicted of or pled guilty to a serious felony; provide evidence that the individual would not be inadmissible based on public health grounds; have health insurance; and hold a driving privilege card.

North Carolina

H36 Government Contracts and Illegal Immigrants Act (06/23/2011) prohibits state and local government contracts with contractors who employ illegal immigrants and requires contractors to verify and certify their employees' legal status or authorization to work.

The North Carolina Growers Association

The North Carolina Growers Association ("NCGA") is a nonprofit business association that helps North Carolina growers, from an array of agriculture sectors, use the federal H-2A temporary worker program. Their primary activities include pooling applications, assisting growers with paperwork, navigating the federal bureaucracy, helping employers comply with regulations, mediating relationships between employers and employees and troubleshooting through the months workers are present in the United States.

The key to the NCGA is pooling applications for growers. This means the association, not the individual producer, applies for the H-2A and H-2B visas. Among the tasks the association manages for employers: demonstrating a labor need, certifying that every effort has been made to recruit U.S. workers and supplying the federal government with detailed information about wages and working conditions. Unlike when a single farmer who uses H-2A workers, workers brought to the United States by the NCGA have the ability move from farm to farm, during the course of a single growing season. Workers can also spend the season on a single farm if that is preferable to employer and employee. This is a system that performs well for the grower and the worker. Participating employers handle their own payrolls for their H2-A workers, while at their farms.

NCGA has a collective bargaining agreement with the Farm Labor Organizing Committee ("FLOC"). FLOC is a national migrant worker labor union, and is a member of the AFL-CIO. This agreement is the first in the United States which allows guest workers to form a union. The agreement includes a formal grievance procedure for workers to address any complaints with the growers or against NCGA. It also establishes a set of guidelines for how workers are recruited, as well as how they can remain eligible for employment with NCGA in future seasons. It also guarantees the worker will have one half day off per

week, a full day's pay if injured, as well as three days paid for funerals, a seniority system for workers who return each year, and a toll free hotline for employers and employees that can make complaints.

South Carolina

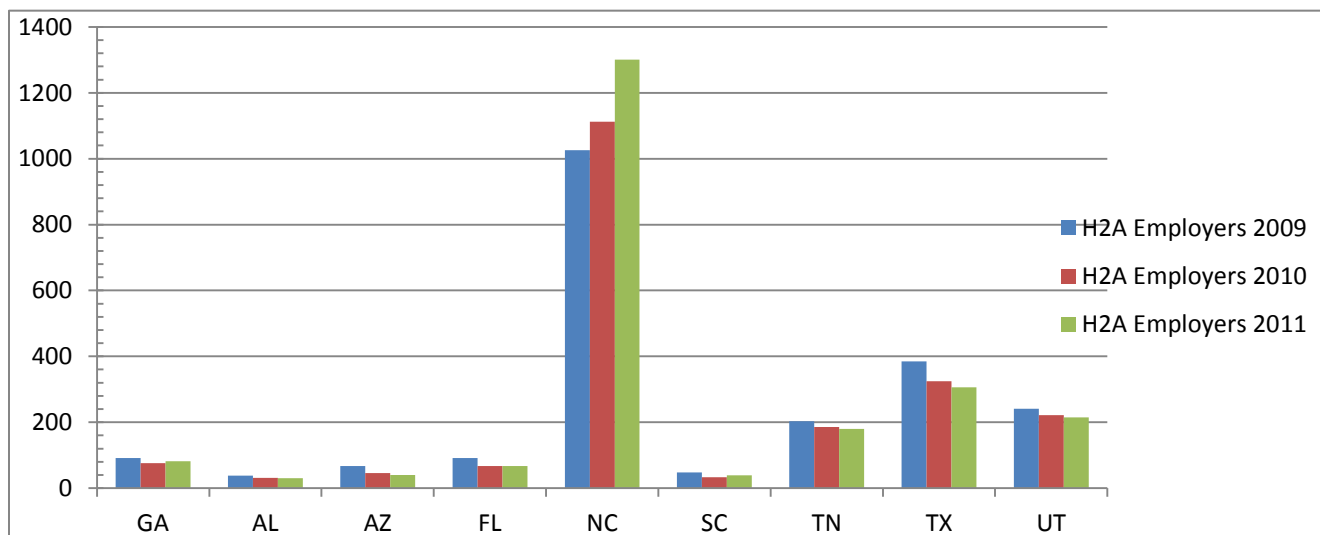
S20 Immigration (06/27/2011) includes provisions on law enforcement, employment, and identification. Police can verify legal status during a lawful stop. The law creates an Illegal Immigration Enforcement Unit within the Department of Public Safety to enforce immigration laws. All public contractors and subcontractors are required to use E-Verify. Private employers must enroll in E-Verify system beginning January 1, 2012. Transporting or harboring an illegal immigrant in any place, including a building or a means of transportation, is a felony. Verification is required for public benefits. Selling false IDs is a felony with a \$25,000 penalty and/or five years imprisonment. It is unlawful for a person eighteen years of age or older to fail to carry any certificate of alien registration.

Arizona

S1070 (04/23/2010) covers multiple issues related to illegal immigration in the state of Arizona. The provisions include establishing state crimes and penalties for trespassing by illegal aliens, failure to carry alien registration documents, stopping to hire or soliciting work under specified circumstances, and transporting, harboring or concealing unlawful aliens.

H2162 (04/30/2010) amends Arizona SB 1070 to specify that law enforcement officials cannot consider race, color or national origin when implementing the provisions of the original law, except as permitted by the U.S. or Arizona Constitution. Additionally, the law clarifies the original law's language around "reasonable suspicion" by requiring state and local law enforcement to reasonably attempt to determine the immigration status of a person involved only while in the process of a lawful stop, detention, or arrest. It lowers the fine for state or local entities sued by legal residents and found guilty of restricting the enforcement of federal law from \$1000 to \$500 for each day the policy is in effect. The law also lowers the fine for individuals that fail to complete or carry an alien registration document from \$500 to \$100 for the first offense.

The graph below illustrates the usage of H-2A in the states reviewed in this report.



VIII. Viability of State Guest Worker Programs

Following the charges outlined in HB87, the Department explored the option and gauged the interest from Georgia growers for creating a state administered guest worker program. Points of discussion included program costs to the employers and employees, employee duration of stay, identification cards, and other topics. Additionally, this program would need to accommodate all aspects of agriculture including the year-round labor needs of dairy, cotton ginning, and urban agriculture. However, in conversations with the U.S. Department of Justice, Georgia Attorney General Sam Olens determined that federal law does not permit state creation of a guest worker program. As solutions continue to be explored, Georgia producers unequivocally agree that a guest worker program designed for the agriculture industry should guarantee a reliable workforce year after year.

IX. Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Agricultural Guest Worker Reform Must Start at the Federal Level

After seven months of traveling the state, hosting meetings, visiting farms, and conducting a survey, it has become more abundantly clear that the solution to the labor issues facing Georgia producers rests in the hands of the federal government. From expanding eligibility to exercising common sense in writing rules for the antiquated program, only the federal government can make this program useful for farmers. It is yet to be seen if H-2A can be rebranded to fulfill the needs of 21st century agriculture, but reforming the archaic program must be a near term priority.

State Departments of Agriculture maintain operational memorandums of understanding with a host of federal agencies. Under these agreements, state specialists conduct inspections for food safety, environmental protection, and other regulatory services required under federal law. Having the regulatory responsibility closer to the citizenry is more efficient and provides greater accountability. Several H-2A reform proposals currently before the Congress call for moving the H-2A program from the USDOL to the USDA. Building on successes of existing state and federal partnerships, State Departments of Agriculture should be considered as cooperating partners in the administration of a federal guest worker program.

Recommendation 2: Improve and Expand Education and Outreach to the Agricultural Industry About State and Federal Labor Recruitment Programs

First, it is recommended that additional resources be placed into educating the agricultural industry about the Federal H-2A program. This study found that over 20 percent of respondents were unfamiliar with this option for hiring workers. Additionally, another 16 percent had heard negative things about this program, suggesting that the program is not popular. Other comments suggested that the program is too expensive and too difficult to enter into, which could also be addressed to some extent with education and outreach efforts.

This study indicates opportunities for improving relationships between the agriculture community and Georgia Department of Labor for worker recruitment issues. Again, education and outreach to this group could have a positive impact and help provide a better resource for growers.

Recommendation 3: Solution Oriented Research Should Continue Through 2013

“More research is needed.” Researchers are often criticized for including this statement in almost every study or report. The Department gathered the data in this study over the period of seven months. In order to serve the needs of decision makers, additional research is needed to understand the complexity

of agriculture labor in Georgia. Research should include but not be limited to tracking employment patterns, crop production cycles, labor needs by commodity and worker concerns.

The benefits of additional research will provide the state with a central repository of unbiased agriculture labor data, the capability to measure impacts of labor programs, and the ability to respond to future policy needs of the state.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: HB 87 - Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011; enact

HB 87/AP

874 **SECTION 20.1.**

875 WHEREAS, Georgia's agricultural industry is a vital pillar for this state's economy and essential to the
876 quality of life enjoyed by all Georgians; and

877 WHEREAS, understanding the impact of immigration reform measures on Georgia's important
878 agricultural industry is a fundamental key to the implementation of immigration reform in a manner that
879 is in the best interests of this state; and

880 WHEREAS, the General Assembly recognizes that the federal guest worker program, designated the H-
881 2A visa program, for temporary and seasonal agriculture immigrant workers is administratively
882 cumbersome and flawed; and

883 WHEREAS, both Georgia and federal law fail to address many of the legal, economic, and security
884 aspects of immigration issues facing our state and especially our agricultural industry; and

885 WHEREAS, these issues of great importance to the economy and of this state have not before received
886 extensive study by the Georgia General Assembly and merit such detailed and specialized consideration
887 at this time.

888 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA that the Department of
889 Agriculture is directed to conduct a study of the conditions, needs, issues, and problems mentioned
890 above or related thereto and recommend any actions or legislation that the department deems
891 necessary or appropriate. The Department of Agriculture shall consider the current and future impact of
892 immigration on the state agricultural industry. The department shall work in conjunction with and
893 collect expert testimony and information from the United States Department of Agriculture, the
894 Department of Justice, and other state governments. The department shall specifically address the need
895 for reform of the federal H-2A program and provide recommendations for such federal reform. In
896 addition, the department shall recommend changes needed in Georgia to provide for improvements in
897 the H-2A process, identify where such action may be taken by the state, and provide a report evaluating
898 the legal and economic feasibility of implementing a state guest worker program. The department may
899 conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to
900 enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives
901 and purposes of this resolution. The Department of Agriculture shall make a final written report to the
902 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives not later than
903 January 1, 2012. Provided that the provisions of this Act have been complied with, the department shall
904 not have any further obligation to continue such study on or after January 1, 2012.

Appendix 2: Commissioner Gary W. Black Written Testimony to U.S. Senate

Judiciary Committee

Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security

United States Senate

Hearing on

“America’s Agricultural Labor Crisis: Enacting a Practical Solution”

Testimony of

Gary W. Black

October 4, 2011

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cornyn, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to talk about the labor needs of Georgia’s agricultural industry.

With over a \$68 billion impact, agriculture is the leading industry in Georgia, employing one in seven Georgians. We lead the country in production of poultry, pecans, and peanuts. Cotton, peaches, fresh market vegetables, blueberries, and ornamentals are also prominent in our agricultural portfolio. Also, it is important to note that the famous Vidalia onions, a labor intensive vegetable, can only be found in our state. Needless to say, Georgia has a vested interest in making sure our agricultural employers have the manpower necessary to effectively run their operations.

This past spring, Georgia producers began calling my office to report labor shortages. In May of this year, Governor Deal asked the Georgia Department of Agriculture (Department) to evaluate the labor situation in the agricultural sector. My department created an informal survey and worked with various agricultural associations for dissemination to their members – the twelve Georgia Commodity Commissions, Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Agribusiness Council, Georgia Urban Ag Council, and others. The survey accepted responses for fifteen days, and we heard from roughly 230 producers representing Georgia’s diverse agricultural economy. Our brief, unscientific snapshot suggested a degree of unmet labor needs during the 2011 spring harvest season.

The survey revealed significant concerns among blueberry and fresh market vegetable producers. Additional variables for this past growing season included unusually high heat and lack of rain causing an unexpected rush in harvest. Bottom-line, the pool of respondents reported on June 10, the unmet availability of 11,080 jobs.

During the month of June , the Georgia Labor Commissioner, Mark Butler, worked with various agricultural associations to place unemployed Georgians in these positions. Even with unemployment rates hovering around ten percent, this task was not as easy as it would seem. For example, last Thursday one Georgia producer shared his story with us. He had one employee that worked half a day one week and two half days the next week. This employee earned a total of \$119. The employee walked off the job and did not return though plenty of work was available. In addition, the employee filed an unemployment claim, and the producer received notification that the employee was eligible for \$235 weekly benefits for seventeen weeks. The producer filed a timely appeal, and it was finally determined that he was not responsible. In addition to harvesting his crops to earn a living, the producer had to take time to ensure he was not held financially responsible for the employee's irresponsibility. We have heard similar complaints from producers regarding the fifty percent rule of H-2A. I do not believe employers should bear this unnecessary burden as they try to create jobs and stimulate our economy. Producers would rather employ Americans, and this aspiration should not be overlooked. Unfortunately, the immediate reality trumps those aspirations.

Simultaneously, we worked with Governor Deal and the Georgia Department of Corrections to develop a pilot program utilizing probationers to fill Georgia's agricultural labor needs. Two producers participated in this program - one with a large farm and one with a small farm. The larger farmer was originally sent 58 probationers to help with his harvest. By combining the probationers with his existing workers, he could accurately compare their productivity. He found the probationers to be half as productive as his other workers, and he even switched to two shifts in hopes of preserving energy. The smaller farmer needed 10-20 workers a day to pick squash and cucumbers. Out of 104 probation workers, this farmer eventually found 15-20 reliable workers. There were some obvious challenges with using probation labor, and the two producers found that the probationers were unable to harvest at the same rate as the other workers. At the end of the day, both producers agreed that the program had potential to meet the niche needs for farmers desperate for workers.

Additionally, the Georgia Department of Corrections is working to establish a transitional inmate workforce program for agriculture – a program that has worked well for other industries in the past. Corrections officials believe they can offer opportunities for nonviolent offenders with skills developed by working in the prison farm system. Agricultural producers would qualify for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) which can be as much as \$2,400. The WOTC is 25% of qualified first-year wages for those employed at least 120 hours and 40% for those employed 400 hours or more. This program is strictly voluntary, and no one is required to participate.

During the legislative session of 2011, the Georgia General Assembly passed into law House Bill 87, the "Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011." We do not yet know the total economic impact of this legislation on the agriculture industry in Georgia. In addition to an E-verify mandate, the law instructs the Department to conduct a study on the legislation's impact, and the results are due by January 1, 2012 to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the Georgia House. The legislation also charged the Department with exploring a state guest worker program. We continue to explore and hear from Georgians what their needs are for labor.

It cannot be contested; the success of Georgia's agricultural industry rests on a legal workforce upon which producers may rely. In my view, it is not just a labor issue but also a food safety issue. We need to make sure we know who is on our nation's farms, and we need to make sure that America does not become reliant on third world countries to put food on the family tables across this country.

Looking at current legislation, I think the HARVEST Act introduced by my home-state senator, Saxby Chambliss, has potential to address some of the labor needs of agriculture. Moving the administration of H-2A program from the United States Department of Labor to the United States Department of Agriculture places the program in an agency familiar with the intricacies of the type of work and labor needed. By expanding eligibility, those producers needing year-round labor who currently have no guest worker program to rely on may participate. It remains to be seen if H-2A can be revised and sanity restored to the bureaucratic process, or if we should take the workable aspects of the program and rebrand it. Either way, something must be done. With a new brand or not, the goal must be a program that works for all farmers.

Regretfully, a large number of illegal immigrants are working in agriculture today. A penalty-based work authorization permit should be considered for offenders. Such a measure could require substantial monetary fines, an annually renewed biometric permit supported by fees that is restricted for agriculture and strict employer enforcement after implementation.

I also think it is not beyond the realm of possibility for the federal government to create a guest worker program and then delegate to states through an MOU the day to day responsibilities of administering the program. This relationship already exists and works well with states implementing environmental and food safety regulations set forth by the federal government.

A robust agricultural guest worker program, properly designed, will not displace American workers. As my testimony shows, in Georgia, even with current high unemployment rates, it is difficult for farmers to fill their labor needs. I encourage you all to work together to develop a guest worker program that is fair to the American employer, fair to the American worker, and fair to the temporary guest worker.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Appendix 3: Additional Survey Information

In fairness to all those that responded to the survey questions and in maintaining the integrity of the data, the following list of responses is complete unabridged data collected.

Appendix A- Responses to Question 3

Please rank each commodity that you produce or process indicating their level of importance.

Please rank each commodity that you produce or process indicating their level of importance. Place a 1 by the crop with the highest annual value and 2 by the crop with the second highest annual value and so on (You need only rank the commodities you grow, produce or process).		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Apples	1.6%	11
Beef	15.4%	107
Bees/Honey	1.6%	11
Blackberries	3.5%	24
Blueberries	7.2%	50
Broilers	3.3%	20
Cabbage	1.9%	13
Cantaloupe	1.3%	9
Carrots	1.0%	7
Corn	21.8%	151
Cotton	29.5%	205
Cucumbers	2.4%	17
Dairy	6.2%	43
Eggplant	1.6%	11
Eggs	0.7%	5
Equine	0.9%	6
Goats	1.2%	8
Grapes	0.7%	5
Greens	2.2%	15
Hay	14.0%	97
Hogs	1.4%	10
Olives	0.3%	2
Onions	1.7%	12
Ornamentals	28.8%	200
Peaches	2.3%	16
Peanuts	29.4%	204
Pecans	8.4%	58
Peppers	2.3%	16
Rye	5.2%	36
Sheep	0.7%	5
Snap Beans	2.2%	15
Southern Peas	1.7%	12
Soybeans	11.8%	82
Squash	3.0%	21
Strawberries	2.3%	16
Timber	12.0%	83
Tobacco	1.6%	11
Tomatoes	3.3%	23
Turfgrass	9.7%	67

Watermelon	3.5%	24
Wheat	11.8%	82
Zucchini	2.6%	18
Other (please indicate)	10.2%	71

Appendix B- Responses to Question 4

Please list your home county

County-Number of Responses

Gwinnett-28	Grady-8	Madison-4	Lumpkin-2
Colquitt-27	Henry-8	McDuffie-4	Meriwether-2
Fulton-20	Jackson-8	Newton-4	Murray-2
Tift-18	Pulaski-8	Oglethorpe-4	Rabun-2
Berrien-16	Union-8	Pierce-4	Tattnall-2
Jefferson-16	Ware-8	Toombs-4	Taylor-2
Forsyth-15	Bartow-7	Baker-3	Treutlen-2
Hall-15	Bulloch-7	Bibb-3	Whitfield-2
Bacon-14	Dougherty-7	Crawford-3	Baldwin-1
Dekalb-13	Screven-7	Evans-3	Douglas-1
Walton-13	Wayne-7	Fayette-3	Echols-1
Cherokee-12	Worth-7	Gilmer-3	Effingham-1
Cobb-12	Burke-6	Glynn-3	Elbert-1
Decatur-12	Dodge-6	Johnson-3	Franklin-1
Wilcox-12	Hart-6	Lanier-3	Haralson-1
Columbia-11	Lee-6	Monroe-3	Heard-1
Dooly-11	Pike-6	Montgomery-3	Jasper-1
Mitchell-11	Rockdale-6	Muscogee-3	Jones-1
Morgan-11	Turner-6	Seminole-3	Marion-1
Appling-10	Washington-6	Terrell-3	Miller-1
Cook-10	Candler-5	Wilkes-3	Paulding-1
Early-10	Chatham-5	Banks-2	Pickens-1
Oconee-10	Harris-5	Barrow-2	Schley-1
Richmond-10	Peach-5	Ben Hill-2	Stephens-1
Sumter-10	Randolph-5	Brantley-2	Stewart-1
Thomas-10	Atkinson-4	Calhoun-2	Towns-1
Clarke-9	Bleckley-4	Camden-2	Troup-1
Clinch-9	Butts-4	Carroll-2	Upson-1
Coffee-9	Clay-4	Clayton-2	Walker-1
Irwin-9	Coweta- 4	Crisp-2	Warren-1
Laurens-9	Floyd-4	Dawson-2	Webster-1
Macon-9	Gordon-4	Glascok-2	Wheeler-1
Putnam-9	Greene-4	Habersham-2	White-1
Brooks-8	Jeff Davis-4	Houston-2	
Emanuel-8	Lowndes-4	Jenkins-2	

Appendix C- Responses to Question 6

In an average year, how many non-family employees do you hire as full-time/permanent employees
(year round, 35 or more hours weekly)?

30	30	60	50	40
92	100	35	60	40
25	25	27	30	65
200	95	80	50	100
40	105	120	100	100
77	24	26	99	115
50	80	23	110	80
75	40	35	45	24
28	40	0	20	30
25	50	40	175	30
30	45	40	75	100
25	45	75	45	40
50	100	40		

Appendix D- Responses to Question 8

If you indicated greater or fewer employees in the previous question, please briefly describe why you have greater or fewer employees for this year.

1 employee died in 2010 and I did not replace (replaced with family member)

500 acres of property to maintain.

Added more acres

All operations expanding to accommodate children wanting to come back to farm

Bad economy

Because of the new law in Georgia

Because of a \$1,000,000 expansion

Because of the economy. This is hard work & it's hard to find the right fit of employee.

Because this operation is growing

Budget

Budget reasons because of benefits

Business growth has required additional labor.

Business has gotten smaller

BUSINESS HAS IMPROVED. I WILL HIRE 2 FULL TIME & 4 PART TIME EMPLOYEES FOR 2012 IN ADDITION TO MY WORKFORCE.

Business has increased

Business is booming! We need more staff if we want to keep growing.

Business is down

Business is growing

Business is growing

Business is growing.

Business is picking back up after drought related watering restrictions and building slow down

business slower

Business volume has improved

Company has scaled back due to drop in sales. Economic downturn.

Competition and decline in sales due to housing slump.

Competition from national accounts has eroded my market share

Create demand for product

Cut back on production

Cutting back to save money. Doing more with less.

decrease in business

Decreased Sales

Demand for product is down

Demand is greater

Down economy

Down economy. Cash flow management. Revenue down over 49% since 2007.

Down turn in construction, less landscape installations

Down turn in economy

Down turn in the volume of customers we service, so our workforce was cut to compensate.

Down turn in the volume of customer we service, so our workforce was cut to compensate.

DOWNSIZED DUE TO ECONOMY

Due to the economy

Economic downturn

Economic downturn of the industry and country.

Economy

Economy

Economy

Economy _ Cut Backs _ increased pay for piecework

Economy and too much competition in the industry

Economy creating less business. Immigration law making it tough to find qualified employees.

Economy Failing

Economy fallout with commercial & new house installations. Business fell by 60%

Economy has contracted. Fewer people looking for lawn services. As people struggle with employment more people turn to lawn care. This causes greater and greater competition and downward pressure on prices.

Economy is bad

Economy- less sales

Economy was what impacted my labor pool, but if I need to add employees most Hispanic labor has left area

Economy

Lack of Sales

Economy, we have not filled open positions as current employees leave the company.

Employees are not as readily available

Equipment upgrades

Expanded our business and as a result need more labor.

Expanded processing and treatment

Expanding business needs, more customers

Expanding operation

Expansion of the dairy farm to milk more cows

Failure of a farm supply business and feed mill.

Farm expansion

fewer = due to economy let down, scaled back

Fewer due to economic challenges

Fewer employees because of decrease in annual budget

Fewer new construction projects-commercial & residential

Greater because our business has grown.

Greater demand for turf.

Growing business

growth

Growth has been less than expected

growth in business demand for services increased

Growth in sales - more work

Have fewer because I have tried to be more efficient with my employees

Housing Market put us out of Turf market

I am a new Business with less than 2 years in operation

I cannot find good help

I can't find full-time employees who can last more than 2-3 weeks before they quit. My business has grown to the point where I need to grow, but I cannot because I need reliable workers.

I contract labor. Fewer skilled laborers were available this season

I do most of my own work but sometimes require help to finish it all

I have expanded a maintenance operation & added 2 people

I have fewer due to the work doing industry and lack of workers willing to do the work.

I have fewer employees because of the addition of a family member (son) to the operation, and discontinuing melons and broccoli because of the labor situation.

IM TRYING TO EXPAND MY OPERATION BUT IM HAVING PROBLEMS HIRING QUALIFIED OR RELIABLE EMPLOYMENT CANIDATES.

Immigration laws scared them off

increase in acreage farmed & cows milked

Increase in business.

increased acreage and production

Increased herd size

Increased interest in crop productivity from growers.

Increased need to cut costs & increase productivity

Increased production

Increased production

Increased sales

increased sales and consequent production requirements

Increased sales/opportunities

increased size of operation

Increasing production

It is less due to the economy and cutbacks by businesses and homeowners.

just hired outside help last year for the first time

Just started mu business this year.

Lack of business

Lack of work

Lack of work

Lawn Maint. gross sales are down 18%. Landscape installation sales are down 40%

Less because of the bad economy and an ongoing drought on/off last 5 years

Less because of the bad economy and ongoing drought in last five years.

Less demand for product due to recession

Less full time employee

Less in sales

Less landscape business.

LESS SALE

Less volume of business

Less Work

Less work

Less work, dry weather.

Less work-Fewer sales

Less, due to the ongoing drought and economic downturn in general

Less-stopped growing sod

Little growth

Loss in businesses and economy has lowered demand; we have cut back to bare minimum just to stay alive. We could be forced to shut down any day.

Many of the textile plants in our area have closed. We are commercial/industrial based.

More employees have been result from more work.

More work to be completed in Blueberries because of their age - also more work with cows because of dry summer

My business boarding and training horses has increased in the last 2 years.

My business is growing

NA; I only hired part time laborers.

NEEDED MORE LABOR

Now have trucking company and need more specialized help.

NOT AS MUCH WORK

Not enough work

Only been in business 2 yrs. This year we opened up another location

only in business for ~5years

operation is growing

our business has grown

Our business has grown over past five years

our operation has grown

Overall drop in sales due to slump in new home construction

POOR ECONOMY & SALES OF NURSRY PRODUCTS CAUSED CUT BACKS IN EMPLOYEES.

Poor economy negatively impacting sales.

Poor economy, drought

Poor sales and less labor to accomplish the task

Previous year only had part time. Hired first full-time employee in 2011

Producing more acres of crops

Real Estate Depression

Really I just started dairying July 1 of this year. And too be honest I have had to go through several before one work out

Recession, sales off by over 50%.

Reduce Cost

reduced sales

Reduced service area-sales slow down

reduced size of operation

Revenues are down 40% due to low new construction in the country

Sales are down

Sales are less and not as many people needed to operate.

Sales are reduced during the last four years

Sales down - Economy bad

Shrinking market

Skill level, trustworthiness and production of Hispanics are second to none. The government has chased my best 3 men out of the state.

Slowdown in the economy and the ability to find qualified labor.

Slow economy/enrollment in E-verify program as of 2010

Slower economy, decreased sales

Slower retail sales

Smaller sales amounts and less cash flow due to summer droughts and excessive hard Cold winter temperatures.

Started a new operation in 09, was flooded and just now in full operation.

STILL SLOW

Substantial reduction in work volume, i.e. drop in sales revenue

Terrible economy

The business has grown

The decline in our national economy has reduced our business and our ability to support additional workers

The economic downturn has forced us to have fewer.

The economics of the last 3 1/2 years has reduced the sales volume by 50%

The Economy

The economy, not enough work

The economy, there is very little work and barely any new construction.

The growth of our business required us to add on to our personnel.

The growth we're having.

The number of clients/customers has increased thus we have more employees

The poor economy

There is less work for landscaping, commercial or residential consequently I need for employees.

This economy and dry weather, the market on cattle, goats, sheep, and hogs has been good just not as many of them.

Timing of staff changes; not a significant reason

Unable to find qualified employees.

unable to hire capable, efficient laborers has resulted in a scale back of permanent full time employees. The work is there, just can't find efficient workers

We are expanding our operation

We are in the landscape maintenance business and our sales have been increasing

We are milking 3 times a day where we were milking 2 times a day.

We continue to grow as a composter in the market and each year add additional employees.

We had things to do we had been putting off

We had to let them go because they were Mexicans and they could not get to be legal

We have had a harder time filling the spots that we have available for work.

We have lost jobs and thus hours have been reduced.

We have more bees to look after then in previous years which takes more people to look after them.

We have more workers due to a higher volume of work

We have not replaced anyone that has left. Our market has been damage by housing crisis.

We have the same number as last year.

We hired another full time man

We maintain fewer acres

We use contract H2B employer

weak economy

Weed Pulling

Well one reason is that the hiring of non-skilled, non-capable, problematic citizens has caused more turnovers, more interview, and more frivolous workers comp claims since the new law....business actually could have been up! But we are left with a work force that has not worked in a decade, does not see it as a positive to do the type work we do, and in general is not physically capable of doing the work. I would love to see the reality TV show of some of our legislatures hiring for these positions and then motivating the United State citizens to do this....and it is not about money! It is about work ethics!!!!!!!

Appendix E- Responses to Question 12

If you indicated greater or less than average for the last question, please briefly indicate why you have greater or less employees for this year.

5 years ago we had a robust market and used part time/seasonal labor. Since 2008 we have been downsizing.

About the same

Again, the economy and the drought

Again, the increase sales in our landscape maintenance business

bad economy

Bad economy, less work

Because of the economy, when the housing market collapsed, we lost 3/4 of our income

Because of a \$1,000,000 expansion of our facility

Because of the growth were having.

Because our business has grown

because production has increased & may vary each year because of production

Because this farm has been growing

BISINESS HAS GROWN

business cut back

Business is good

Business is growing

Business slower

Cannot find the labor NEEDED!

Could not find employees as needed

Could not find labor

Couldn't get enough help to harvest watermelons and cantaloupe

couldn't get help

Create demand for product

Crop damaged by hail

Crop production on my present acreage will increase for the next 2 years

decrease in volume of business

Decrease in all previous 2 years. Increase in 2011.

Decreased demand

Decreased Sales

Demand for product is down

Did not hire anyone last year

Down Economy

drop in sales due to housing decline

Drought

Due to a combination of the recession and the legislature in their wisdom making it illegal to hire Mexicans

Due to the economy, more companies out there, causing us to be more efficient for less money

Due to the weather conditions we had work that needed to be accomplished in a shorter amount of time than normal.

Economic downturn

Economy

Economy and less available labor

economy and too much competition in the industry

Economy cut backs

Economy is the main reason but when it comes back where do I find people willing to do manual labor?

Economy- less sales

Economy

Lack of Sales

economy, drought

Expanded processing and treatment

Expanding

Expanding Nursery.

Expansion

Expansion of container true seedling production

Failing Economy

farm expansion

Farm production has increased

Fewer acres to maintain/lower sales volume

Fewer Hunts, Down 50%

Fewer new construction projects-commercial & residential

Georgia's new immigration laws

Greater farm activity.

Greater product demand

Had a slight problem this year getting enough people when we hit our peak time. No extra workers available.

Hard to find qualified workers

Herbicide resistant weeds

Hired more part-time due to increased workload

House Bill 87 I needed 30 to 40 people to pick my berries. The people would not come to Georgia from Florida because of Bill 87

I cannot find good help

I did more common labor myself

I had less, but I let them go because my price went so low I couldn't keep them

I had the same as average but I worked really hard to keep and maintain workers. Turnover was greater than average.

I have a seed cleaner and used part time help to clean oats, wheat & rye but the demand for those services has decreased to about 25% or less than what it was in the past

I have less non-family part-time/seasonal employees this year because I discontinued melons and broccoli from my farming operation

I have one full time employee

I mechanical harvest earlier than normal

I pay contractor with understanding skilled employees will average 10.00/hr & require skill.

I was 15-20 workers short this year. Due to laws that effected the migration of seasonal help.

I will need these employees in October and do not know yet how hard it will be to find the labor. Immigration laws scared them off

Increased acreage and production

Increased production

Increased production

Increased sales and production requirements

Increasing production

Increase in price, more acreage added

just hired full time outside help last year, used part-time help before that

Labor availability reduced -

Labor did not come to GA due to fear of harassment because of New illegal alien law

Lack of new construction is hurting sales and keeping prices soft, addition labor is becoming a luxury for me.

Lack of reliable workers

Lack of work

Lack of work and unable to find competent labor.

Landscaping and turf sales have been very slow and hard to come by

Larger number of acreage in production

Larger properties to maintain during growing season.

Less became seasonal part-time are migrant labor that did not want to come to Georgia this year

Less business

Less business

Less business

Less business.

Less due to the economy

Less- Economy and drought over last 5 years

less economy and drought over last five years

Less in sales

Less part time labor, but more full time to replace them

LESS SELLERS

Less than the average.

Less work

less work

Less work

Less Work Load

less work load, bidding for work was contributing factor. No new contracts this year.

Less, because our state gov scared them all off with the new immigration law

Lost jobs and economy being slow means less development, thus less need for design, install, etc.

Market slow down and employees not available.

Members of our legal Hispanic work force have left the state due to the perceived hostility and fear resulting from the GA Immigration Reform bill

Migrant workers were afraid to come to Georgia

Money

MORE BUSINESS

more cows

More landscaping work

More production & expansion more crop

More sales/opportunities

More work to do

Moved away. Afraid of Immigration Law

My business is growing

No Mexicans left here to work- they all left.

No migrant workers to gather produce. Scared to come to Georgia because of our laws.

NO PEOPLE COME TO WORK THIS YEAR

no work

No work!

No workers in the area.

not able to find legal workers

not able to find legal workers

Not as much lawn care demand. Housing industry went bust a couple years ago. Builders become competitors.

NOT AS MUCH WORK

Not sure yet. But thinking will be less because business volume is less

Ongoing drought and economic downturn

operation does not require more

Operation has grown enough to need additional seasonal help.

operation is growing

our business is growing

Part-time seasonal employees are used to gather pecans. We have a very poor crop this year.

Purchased a harvester because we were fed up with H2A and lazy employees.

Real Estate Depression

Recession, sales off by over 50%.

Reduce Cost

reduced sales due to economy

Sales are down; we are cutting production

Sales are reduced

Same as B4

same as question #7

Slow economy

Slower economy, decreased sales

Some of the workers have left the country and returned to their home country. It's hard to find and train new workers with the previous worker's expertise.

There were not enough immigrant workers to hire. They skipped Georgia.

The economy

The Economy

The workers are no longer available due to the new GA immigration law.

They fear for their safety and do not want to risk getting me or themselves in trouble!

This year we needed more workers in field of watermelons but wasn't available

TRYING TO EXPAND OUR OPERATION.

We are in the H2A program. During peak harvest periods we hire documented workers. These workers were not available in June & July

We could not get any help because of House Bill 87. We tried to work Americans and they would not because it was too hot.

we have increased production

We have less employees due to a lack of workers

We have less full time need, more part time/seasonal

We have more conscious of our financial pressure to minimize non billable work.

We have the same amount but have had to spend countless hours finding and hiring these to fill the positions. Most leave after a couple days now versus before we could count on them for the season.

We needed more people to do more work.

We use H2-B, but because the USDOL just forced us to increase our prevailing wage from \$9 to \$12.05 per hour, we had to lay them off and send them back home. It's sad because now we don't have enough employees to handle all the clients I have. I could grow, take on more work, buy more equipment, pay more taxes, and add to the local economy, but I cannot because my government made my service become too expensive for my clients to afford and now they go and use another company that uses illegals.

We were unable to get handpicked to come and work. We had the work.

We will but less peanuts this year

weed control

Weed Pulling

Weeds resistance to herbicide application

work force reduction availability

work load

Workers were not available in 2011. This was particularly true during the first 2 weeks of Blueberry Harvest (April 25- May 10)

Workers were scared to come to Georgia because of the new law.

Appendix F- Responses to Question 32

What is/are the major reason(s) for hiring difficulties? If you do not have difficulties, please put not applicable.

MUST HAVE DRIVER'S LICENSE, CLEAN MVR, PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1- over lapping seasons with other crops on other farms

2- daily work hours vary - some with late night work

1. language barriers

2. Fear of State Laws

1. nature of business is seasonal; 2. county or municipal contracts are 7 months; 3 economy

a hot-cold-dirty job

A tremendous amount of documented labor has left the state of Georgia due to the immigration reform laws that were passed. The existing labor force is minimal and documented laborers, Hispanic or otherwise are far and few. Caucasian, African American and American Asians do not want to labor in the heat of the summer in the southeast doing landscape work.

after being hired. They do not show up or only work a couple of hours and then quit.

Agricultural work is hard-few people are willing to work this hard

All the help left

All the workers that are qualified went to another state.

American kids have no skills any more for farm work. except immigrants

American labor pool is poorly educated, has difficulty passing the drug test, many times in parole, can't seem to lake it to work on a regular basis, can't seem to find the energy TO work when they do come in

American workers are not interested in getting dirty, bloody, sweaty, working weekends & holidays, getting to work at 4 a.m. 2 mornings a week & at 6 a.m. 5 mornings a week.

American workers cannot take the summer heat and long hours required for the job.

American workers do not want to do our job needs. They are not available or when they try, the

American workers do not produce as the same rate or stay as long.

American workers do not want to work the hours we work or the type work.

Americans are lazy. We have to spend large amounts of money to get legal immigrants from Mexico to do this sort of work. No one is willing to do this sort of work. Americans think they are too good to work. More money can be made while sitting at home on the couch collecting unemployment.

Americans can't or won't work hard

Americans don't want to work that hard. Mexicans have documentation problems.

Americans don't want to do farm work, those that do usually have drug or alcohol problem; they are not reliable, late, and lazy, want to work under 40 hrs a week.

Americans will not do field labor. If they do they will not stick to it.

Americans workers cannot take the summer heat and long hours required for the job.

Applicants are lazy or lack experience. Some applicants can't pass a drug test or do not have a driver's license or reliable transportation

Applicants can't pass a drug test, unreliable, uneducated, and have poor work ethic

Applicants do not wish to work outside in the summer.

Applicants have no driver's license, drug use, expect higher wages

At this time I have not had any problems getting workers, but I am about to start hiring and do not know if I will have the same access that I used to employees that I used to.

Attitude, education level

Available workers

Availability

Availability

B/C it's impossible to hire legals w/ driver's license including whites and blacks who won't to work hard for a living. Gov't handouts are too easy!

Because of Georgia's new immigration laws, many Hispanics have moved to other states. The available "legal workers" are unwilling to perform the work and quit after a short time.

Bill 87

Can only hire seasonal/part time and pay minimum pay due to the economy

CANADITES LACK A WORK ETHIC AND LACK LOGIC SKILLS TO BE TRUSTABLE.

Can't afford their request.

Can't find Americans willing to do physical labor. Too many alcoholics & dope addicts in area. Latinos afraid.

can't find anyone wanting to do field and farm work

Can't find legal workers

Can't find someone who wants to work and/or doesn't have work ethics

Can't find white & black people America people that will work

Can't find workers that are legal & if they are & non-hispanic, they don't try to pick fast enough to ever make minimum wage

can't get locals to work due to gov't hard outs. Migrant workers are scared to come to Georgia.

Caucasian Americans & African Americans simply will not work full time or part time farm jobs. They believe it is beneath them to work on a farm or get dirty. Hispanic or immigrant workers do a great job, but I can't get them because of existing immigration laws

Competitive pay rates and benefits.

Competitive salaries due to a shortage of qualified workers

Current state immigration policy has terrorized the labor pool I rely on to the point that they have left/cannot acquire driver's licenses.

Dairy is 7 days per week with a broken day

DIFFICULT TO FIND HORTICULTURE EXPERIENCE

-Difficult work

-General government w/immigration laws make it tough

Difficulty finding qualified applicants willing to work long hours- too many applicants have had drug issues

domestic American workers do not want to do farm labor - there was a shortage of Hispanic workers made worse by HB 87

Domestic help is not interested in 12-14 hour days in all climate conditions

Domestic labor does not think they have to work to receive a check, every time we try to hire

domestic labor part time we end up with a workers comp case---the laws and benefits reward those who abuse the system.

Don't like the hard work & long hours

Driver with Clean License

Drug screening and work ethics

drug screening; work ethics

Due to the need of experience in pruning the trees, it is difficult to hire local workers

education

Education level of farm labor

Employee need to be production minded, not hourly. They need experience with moving their hands and fingers quick. They need to be trained at this. We cannot afford to train them.

Everybody wants a check & not a job. The government makes it too easy for handouts so we have to result to hiring immigrant workers

Everyone wants a job, nobody wants to work.

Expensive, driver's licenses

Experience

Fear

Fear of legal issues

Federal government intervention

Federal Red Tape

FEW OR NONE COMING BY

Find people who want to work and don't mind working long hours.

finding employees with the proper work visa. The citizens are not dependable; they only want to work for 2 to 3 days a week.

Finding employees that take pride in work and who will want to grow with business.

Finding legal Hispanics and or American that want to work in the landscape industry.

Finding motivated employees willing to do hard work and learn on the job.

Finding people who will work and be dependable

Finding people wanting to work

Finding qualified workers willing to work on weekends and holidays as well as the hours of dairy farm work

Finding qualified workers-someone with experience operating equipment: finding someone that is dependable-show up for work

Finding someone who doesn't mind working

finding worker with "not-so-common sense" to fill a temporary position at minimum wages

Finding works that are dependable and competent

Folks do not want to do farm work when the Gov pays them not to work.

Folks willing to work.

for 2011 crop year -- pickers did not come due to E-Verify fear

Georgia's new LAW.

Government paying too many people NOT to work. They may come to work if you pay them cash, so it doesn't affect their hand out. But that's the only way.

Hard to find experienced workers who live close enough to work for me,

Hard to find people who are willing and able to do a good job

Hard to find qualified people with a driver's license

hard to find trained workers

Hard to find. Not educated

hard to work locals because of laws

Hard work that most people do not wish to do.

High cost of health insurance

Hiring "people" is easy - hiring people to work is very difficult

Hiring difficulties are a direct result of a lazy population that gets paid to sit around and do nothing via "entitlements". If the result of laziness was starvation, dramatic results would be seen.

Hiring whites or blacks not very dependable. Would like to hire young migrant workers very few available due to all the migrant laws.

Hispanic workers are leaving because of fear of new laws & being targeted by Law enforcement agencies

Hispanics are leaving the state. Locals absolutely will not milk cows like required on a large commercial doing

I assume legal status of workers is primary. When people felt safe in area, they were willing to make commitment to upgrading skills

I cannot find US citizens with the skill and willingness to do our kind of hard labor

I could not find better workers than I have at the moment.

I will not have difficulties if all government people will just go home and leave me alone. If new law is fully implemented we will have to shut down a farm that has operated for over 200 years

if they are good workers, they already have a job. Most don't want a job, just a paycheck
Immigrant workers are the only ones that will work in my industry due to nonimmigrants not willing to work. Immigrants DO NOT have any excuse to receive temporary legal work status like so many think

Immigrants have left the state in droves due to the new law and our legislators had nothing in place to replace the workforce.

Immigration laws

Immigration Laws Past in GA!!!

In general, people don't want to work the number of hours in a week we do. They also don't want to do the type of work we do. Many of the people who apply don't want to work they only want a paycheck. Also, many of the people who apply are drawing some type of government payment, and the only want to make a certain amount of money.

Ins

It is difficult to find people with experience working bees, and available

It is hard to find people who can multi-task. For instance, I have a mechanic who is my mechanic. All my drivers are qualified to drive tractor trailers. I also have a truck driver who is an electrician

It is hard to find people with the right skills who will work without someone watching them constantly.

It is tough to find people who to work 70 hours a week (peak season - 35/40 in off season) in a manual labor position outdoors.

It is very difficult work; it's hot, long hours, bending, lifting, etc.

It's easy to find more people who want paychecks. Very difficult to find people who want to learn about ornamental plants and herbs and care about producing a premium product.

Job is labor intensive

Just hard to find the good help that are legal. Americans don't want to work because it is too hard.

Hispanics love the work - but if they are not legal we can't hire them.

Just the available work force, we drug test, we e-verify, we perform back ground checks at times and the combination does not allow for a large work pool to choose from.

LABOR ACCESS - COMPETITION

Labor Force has moved to other states where migrant labor laws are more relaxed and human beings that want to work are not intimidated by those that do not want to work.

Laborers in our areas have left due to perception that was implied due to immigration reform

Labor intense work

Labor intensive and can't find people willing to work

Labor is NOT available, work is too physically demanding.

Labor shortage Plenty of Hispanic labor but lack of people with driver's licenses. Very little interest in our field from domestic labor force; ie American labor force.

Lack of any work ethic with local labor supply

lack of applicants to do field work

Lack of available workers

Lack of availability of a sufficient number of qualified applicants

Lack of experience

lack of experience or training for farm work

Lack of experience/training in needed work area

Lack of good work ethic across the board. We have raised a nefarious generation who has their hand out.

Lack of irrigation knowledge, training

lack of knowledge

Lack of legal immigrants wanting to work in fields. Too much paper work

Lack of people

Lack of proper documentation or Identification - We don't hire them without

Lack of qualified labor pool. That is hireable

Lack of qualified, willing workers.

Lack of quality workers

Lack of skilled workers

Lack of trained personnel that want a laborer position

Lack of work ethic, no knowledge of ginning cotton.

Lack of work ethics in Americans

Lack of workers at the right time

Lazy white and black workers. Lack of Hispanic help.

-Lazy, not motivated

-They want more income than we can afford to pay

-No work experience

LEAVE FOR BETTER JOB

Legal workers don't want to work in the field.

Less work

Limited supply of applicants.

Limited supply of people willing to do farm work

Local labor does not want to work very much

Locals do not want to do the hard physical labor required

locating someone with knowledge, skill and a solid work ethic

Location, labor-intensive work, lack of general workforce

Long hours & type of work

Loss of full time jobs in area

Low pay means low loyalty, various HR issues are regular occurrence, including absences, tardiness, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Many qualified employees have left.

Many workers do not have legal documents, so you cannot hire them.

Mexicans are scared of being profiled even if they are legal so they will not come to Georgia.

Migrant labor will not stay long for fear of government

migrant workers are avoiding GA, due to new law

Migrants were not available.

More Gov. rules & regulations are causing good workers to leave and many people don't want to work in fields, when weather cond. are poor hot & cold

Most are not willing to work outdoors and complete the tough tasks that come with the occupation.

Most do not care and do just enough to get by. Not interested and seem apathetic to the job and most other responsibilities

Most don't want to work. Perform required task

Most guys are not legal. They also cannot get driver's license

Most importantly is finding someone to complete the task of harvesting produce & maintaining the physical labor components of field workers.

Most labor not experience in nursery work

Most new hires either work a few days and leave or cannot follow our production schedules. We can send out as many as 100 W-2 for up to 15 seasonal hires.

Most people are idiots.

MOST PEOPLE ARE NOT WILLING TO WORK IN THE WEATHER CONDITIONS/HOURS OF THE INDUSTRY.

Most people do not want to work in hot conditions - or in the field - or work the hours needed.

Most people do not want to work. They want a paycheck without working for it

Most people don't want to do this type work

Most people have gotten lazy, and know they can get a check from Uncle Sam

Most people will not do work that we require

Nanny state mentality of politicians & failure of government to enforce existing laws

Native born Americans do not want/are not able to perform as tree workers.

Nature of work - hard, dirty, long hours

need more money, can't afford.

Need valid driver license and valid work permits

New immigration law

New Law

no driver's license - many personal problems

No driver's license

people don't want to work that are legal

Not enough licensed plumbers to work in the field-i.e: state license and driver's license

Not enough workers due to Georgia new immigration law.

No Legal,

No native wants to do field work.

No one wants to work hard.

No one wants to work in the field except Hispanics. Currently there are not enough Hispanics to fill farm jobs.

No one wants to work they can draw unemployment pay and sit on their butt while farmers struggle to pay bills and maintain our assets. Government handout problems are causing the downfall of this nation.

No one wants to work they would rather draw unemployment check

No one wants to work.

No one wants to work. The government pays healthy people to sit on their butts and watch TV. Everyone thinks they're entitled to \$100,000.00 a year but they don't want to work for it. They expect the government to hand it to them. AND we practically do!

No reliable applicants

Nobody wants to work in field harvesting and will not stay on job

non migrate workers cannot physically perform field labor/and or will not show up for work the next day.

None

Non-migrant workers not interested in this type of work

Not a good labor pool

Not able to pay enough because of current economy

Not around

Not enough Hispanics, unfit Americans will not do hard, hot landscape work no matter what the pay.

not enough labor available due to govt threats

Not enough legal workers

Not enough local labor that wants to work. They want a check but not work for it.

NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE

Not enough workers to do our line of work. Who wants to cut grass in 100 degree weather?

Not enough good workers around

Not many available last year

not many people know how to process animals

Not many people, especially Americans, want to work on a dairy farm

Not many qualified candidates with experience who can pass pre-employment tests in marketplace. Public is used to cheap labor and correlating cheap prices in the marketplace.

Not many want to do field work anymore

Not qualified

NOT QUALIFIED FOR EXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT

Not qualified in certain aspects of our industry

Not qualified, lack of experience, not dependable, poor work ethic, can draw a check without working

Not too many people want seasonal work. They want something more stable. Plus its HARD work.

Most people can make \$3-500.00 a week just being on Welfare. Why work a hard job when you can get free money

not trained / educated

Not very many qualified available.

Not willing to do agricultural type work.

ODD Hours / ODD Shifts in the dairy business - cannot pay what nearby plants can afford

only issue is lack of desire to work since unemployment benefits seem better to them

Operation runs 24 hours per day 7 days per week. No one wants to work nighttime and weekends.

other higher paying jobs

our biggest problem is we have been laying off people due to economy & demand. We have not had a need to hire. We are not replacing if one leaves

Our systems in place as far as government

Overall immigration environment makes farm laborers w/experience fearful to come to GA

papers for migrants

Passing e-verify. Finding US citizens that want to work.

People are sorry - don't want to work or they have addiction problems

People do not like working in the heat, or long hours

People do not want to do manual labor.

People do not want to work

People do not want to work at a wage that will not fund the operation

People don't want to do the physical work

People don't want to work they just want a check

People don't want to work too hard

People want a government hand out

People furnished by GA dept. of labor were not physically able to do work, or not willing to do hard work, picking cucumbers.

Workers have documentation but are unable to obtain GA Driver's license. money hungry local law enforcement take advantage of this.

Workers tend to go to county where they are not harassed by local law

People in general are too lazy to do manual labor.

People say they do not want to work long hours and they said it was too hot to work outside.

Person not having proper ID'S

Person with supervisor skills

Poor work ethic

Production, willingness to work longer hours, willingness to work in high temperatures, dependability, loyalty, ability to get to & from work consistently & on time

Prospects don't have proper documentation

Qualified people who will work odd hours - outside work

Qualified workers

Qualified workers have left the state over fear of them being caught up in the program. Additionally, our work is very hard, hot and physical work. Very few non-Hispanic workers will do the work...even for a very competitive wage.

Qualified workforce. Higher minimum wage

Regulations pertaining to residency and obtaining a driver's license

Retaining workers is difficult due to the hard manual labor

Seasonable work and finding people with a prefer work ethic in own local work force

Seasonal work

Sheer number of available workers in the region has seemed to decrease.

Shortage of help for the 2011 growing season

Showing up when scheduled to work days pay for a day's work.

Skill level

small farmer

Some return home to another country. Some want more money.
sometime workers are not qualified or available

Sometimes difficult finding documented workers.

Substance abuse by workers

Substance abuse. Employees want a "job". but don't want to work. unemployment income is easier than working

Supervisory/mgmt. Position is difficult due to cost of living on St. Simons.

Temporary labor for seasonal work is always a challenge to find and keep. But, after 30 years of handling peanuts some come back after years.

The amount able to pay

The biggest issue is finding people who will do the work which is physical and time consuming.

The culture from the federal gov. that we will look after you. field work is considered undesirable. In a growing economy we've got a record of moving people up through the ranks (pay) that they can have decent wage

The economy. No new construction

the H2B process is too slow and costly. 1 applied for working in April and got them in August-have to leave in Dec. Local employees do not-last-cannot pass drug test and production is low. I have to go through 10 people to get 1.

The lack of U.S. citizens willing to work. There are too many gov. regulations & restrictions. U.S. citizens would rather stay at home & draw unemployment

THE LEGISLATION SCARED GOOD WORKERS OUT OF STATE

The major difficulty is keeping the employee, once they realize how hard the work is, they start looking for a job that doesn't require hard work.

The new state law about immigration scared them away

The reason it is hard to hire/retain qualified workers is that we can't pay them what they are worth.

The work is too hard for your average American citizen. They do not want to do the type of work available. The American citizen is spoiled and lazy for the most part.

The work is too hard for your average American citizen. They do not want to do the type of work available. The American citizen is spoiled and lazy for the most part.

The younger generation is not trained. They cannot operate tractors and other equipment. Our people are becoming like Mexicans (back labor)

There are no American workers who want to do manual labor. Even management positions are hard to fill. Documented Hispanic labor is scarce.

There are not enough legal workers that will do this type of labor

There are very few technically trained people available that have a desire to work in the climate conditions we have to work in.

There just aren't many qualified men to choose from

They are all collecting unemployment as long as possible and do not want to work

They are only a certain (amount) of worker willing to do the type work we need done, these are generally migrant workers.

They don't show for interviews. If they do, we hire but they find out they can't handle or are unwilling to do the strenuous work involved.

They get a check & want work

They lose driver's license, fail drug test, or don't have good work ethics.

This is hard hot work and most people are not willing to do this kind of work.

Too easy to access welfare type checks from government

Too easy to get on and stay on some government (state or federal) benefit program

Too few legal Hispanics. American workers seem to think labor is not respectable for a livelihood.

Too hard of work; outside labor

too many capable people are financially better off to stay on welfare, food stamps, etc. than they are to work for income

Too many Gov. give away programs and New Georgia Laws regarding workers

Too many state and federal programs that pays better for and individual to sit on their butt.

Trustable people/Reliable

Type work, pay

Unqualified uncaring work force, drugs, alcohol

Unqualified workforce

Unreasonable labor laws. Specialty crop with tomatoes and people do not work more than 3-5 days and abandon job.

Unwilling to do the work. Usually quit within one to two days.

USA should grant visa for 90 days at a time to Mexicans by name for working for a specified farmer at farm location without so much red tape and government regulation such as the H-2 program has; let the worker have the option of furnishing his own living quarters

Valid driver's license, pass a drug test, not a workman's comp risk

VERY FEW QUALIFIED APPLICANTS, WILL DO FARM LABOR - TOO HOT, TOO COLD, ETC.

Very few respond to ads

wanting to work, and language

We are a seasonal business - open 3 months of the year. H2A is not user friendly, not timely & expensive. Too much paper work & money with no guarantees. Local help for the most part are not capable of working on farms.

We are located in a rural area. The labor pool is small and diluted between several area farmers. Often times it is difficult to workers w/ a clean background check and/or drug test.

We do not have the money, we need a grant we have been in business 47yrs and we have never seen sales so low

We have been focusing on hiring European and African descendants rather than Hispanic because the Hispanic seems to be under fire by government policy makers. It is as if we are running the United States' border up here in Cumming, Georgia. We have had no Canadians apply at all....so it must be the other border everyone is talking about.

We have to gear up for a large workforce on a seasonal basis. It is hard to recruit qualified workers on a seasonal basis.

We operate grazing dairies. few workers are qualified in this specialized area

We run two 12 hour shifts most workers will not work after a week. Manuel labor is difficult to rind

welfare system too lucrative

White men have no labor abilities/poor work ethics.

Will not regular

With our present economy, there are American citizens needing work. We have more men who come weekly seeking employment. They are willing to relocate for work. We have employed as many as 9 H2A workers/yr. until economy changed. We have employed American citizens and 2 men (H2A)-2011

with the exception of 2, all employees hired either quit because they did not want to work in heat or cold or were too lazy to keep up with other crew members.

With unemployment payments as good as they are and length of time to receive payments, good employees don't have to work.

work ethic

Work is hot-cold-hard-demanding. work force found to be less than desirable

Work is outside Hot & Dirty

Workers are not trained

Workers are not available

Workers aren't available. I have to work hard to find enough

Workers don't want to work

WORKERS NOT AVAILABLE IN THIS AREA

-Workers not familiar w/equipment

-Workers hrs too long

Workers were not available. They went to other states when our harvest began.

Workforce is lazy; finding workers that are willing to hustle (even on an incentive program) and do the job correctly is very difficult.

Working conditions

Working conditions - outside work - hot cold, rainy, wet etc... dirty - work requires getting dirty!!

X

Young white generation does not want to work. They want to pay with no duties. I pay my Mexican workers very well. Wish I could get more of them. They want to work and I never have problems out of them

Appendix G- Responses to Question 33

Do you think hiring workers next year (2012) will be: less expensive than 2011, about the same as 2011, more expensive than 2011 or not sure. Please Explain.

1) Cost of inflation 2) People won't work less than \$10.00 an hour 3) No driver's license

a lot of people out of work

All costs are rising!

All workers are very uneasy about the changes, it cost more to keep them here!

A fortunate to have 2 good workers now which we hope to keep

As I said in #32 it is extremely hard to find Dairy labor and therefore if you find any you have to pay more

As our work force moves away from the State, those with the work force culture that have driver's license are asking for higher prices.

As the economy improves, the labor force will be smaller, costs will go up.

As things grow more complicated and more workers move away, qualified legal workers will be harder to find.

At this time, I do not anticipate any problems. But then the future is not certain especially with this particular political climate. I am going to make effort to be as dependent as possible without hiring additional labor.

Availability

Availability will be less with House Bill 87

Because fewer migrant workers will come to GA

Because I plan only to hire what I need and no more. It is easier to do without or do it myself - rather than have to redo the job

Because of fear, Migrant workers will avoid Georgia, for fear of being deported. Our only choice is to use H2-A which comes at a much great cost to the farmer

Because of the economic downturn

Because the workers we have been hiring are scared, because of the new law GA has imposed. both the economy & availability are major factors that need to be resolved - at least moving in that direction

CAN'T HIRE MEXICANS LOCALS ARE MORE EXPENSIVE

Changed our pay scale

competing for workers

Competition for quality workers

cost of living

Cost of living etc.

cost of living going up

cost of living going up. the need to attract more qualified workers.

cost of living has increased

Cost of living increases, and reduction in qualified labor pool

Cost of living keeps increasing so I have to pay my workers more in order to try keep them working for me.

Costs always going up.

don't believe there will be any available!

Don't see a major change in Economy

Don't see much change coming in 2012

Don't think wages will increase

Due to new immigration laws, there will be less workers to fill job needs. The wages I pay will have to go up in order to keep my workers

Due to new rules it will cost more because it will drive rates up in pay and cause more cost in paper work for each hired person

Due to the presidency in 2012. immigration will be brought up. Cause nothing but difficulties

Economy is still sinking folks are just glad to have work

Everybody wants more money 4 less work

Everybody wants more money than farm economy can afford.

Everything is costing more

Everything is increasing in cost

Everything is more expensive

Expenses aren't the main concern. Availability of workers is the issue

field labor wages change when we can afford to

Fewer qualified workers competing for more jobs

Fewer qualified workers=higher wages & benefits

Fewer quality people

Fewer Workers

FEWER WORKERS

For the past several years cost have gone up. Experience tells me it will again

Fuel, Transportation, Smaller work force available

General wage pressure

Georgia has put farms on an unequal playing field with other states. The workers will simply work in Florida blueberries then skip Georgia and go straight to North Carolina. It will cost farmers more to harvest ant crop in Georgia. Georgia farms will have to beg workers and feel sure they will demand higher wages, when they already make @ 10.00 and hour.

Good, hardworking, drug free workers are in high demand. Dumb Ass government is running off all the good, hardworking, drug free Hispanics that are willing to do the hard work for \$12 - \$15 per hour. Americans don't want to do this work.

Good workers know that they are few and far between.

Government regulators & requirements

H2A AEWR goes up every year

H2A companies continue to raise their fees

H2A is \$9.11 and usually goes up each year

Have not hired anyone lately

Health care

I am not sure how much the labor pool has shrunk, obviously the smaller the pool combined with the same demand will drive up wages.

I believe the "field labor" work force will be harder to find, therefore requiring a higher price to obtain an adequate labor force.

I can't pay more

I do not know how strong the economy will be in 2012

I don't see anything on the horizon to make it any different.

I don't see the economy getting any better, not anytime soon at least

I don't see the economy getting much better and with that I would find it hard to pay more money to employees. I think following the guidelines that we are supposed to when hiring and with that I think it could not get more expensive and time consuming than it already is, but it might.

I don't see why labor cost should go up in 2012

I expect higher turnover as I continue to hire & fire Americans. I continue my elusive search for an honest, reliable, hardworking American

I expect wages demanded to be higher, and expect taxes and insurance will be higher.

I pay my help a good salary. They are happy with what they get paid.

I plan on hiring approximately the same number of seasonal employee's and giving my full time employee's an opportunity to make more money when busy.

I think I will give a pay raise to man I have working for me some time next year

I try to give my employees a cost of living raise each year.

I will give COL increases

I will need to stay competitive with my pay scale

If congress should increase the minimum wage, it will be more expensive, since I pay most of my workers more than the minimum wage.

If I use H2A workers it will be much more expensive

If labor is short, there will be more demand for those who can work legally.

If labor shortages continued then I expect cost of labor to increase, particularly with the contracted labor (seasonal) that we currently use.

If the Hispanic labor leaves we will have to hire more workers to do the same job and will have more turn over that will lead to more cost in training and paper work.

If there is a low labor force that is qualified for landscaping I will need to pay more if I need more labor.

If we can get help <white or black> the demand more money for less work

If you can find someone qualified, first they have to have an interest in the job. Most people just want a pay check on Friday without caring what they do to earn that paycheck. An employer has to reach a point with pay and benefits to override the government's incentive to work, i.e., unemployment pay for 99 weeks, give away programs so you can sit at home and have babies, buy expensive groceries without having to work to get them, new cars just to ride around in, free cellphones, disabilities that only affects your race; sugar diabetes for example that I still work with, but others get disability. We have to overcome all of these issues and still have problems hiring qualified people that WANT to work.

If, workers can be found at all there will not be enough to support the farms production and the above average wages will be very hard to pay if at all because of having to cut planting acreage to less than half-as in previous years

Inflation

Inflation

Inflation costs of basic necessities increasing have to account for cost of living increase on labor and supplies

Inflation if fuel ate

Insurance and other regulation costs going up. And the lack of qualified workers available. it has already forced wages up by 30% 60% this year, the H2 programs are trying to force employees to hire locals

It is more difficult to find immigrant or migrant workers with a 'green card'. Those with proper ID cost more to hire. They are savvy to the INS game

It will continue to be more difficult to find qualified workers so it will cost more in time/effort to find them.

It's fairly easy to hire 1 person for temp. work. I generally pay the same from season to season if the person is experienced

Jobs pay less and are fewer, so part-time/full time workers earn less to compensate. I contribute this to lack of construction and being overwhelmed by illegal migrant workers. They are everywhere here

Just because unemployment rates are high does not mean there is more labor available that want to do our work. If there was less "free" money these people might have more incentive. Often I make an offer for uneducated, unskilled jobs, only to hear that they don't want the work because the government gives them almost as much to stay at home. We also have a strict drug free program that many can't pass.

Labor getting harder to get because too much unemployment parents don't want children to work hard work

Labor pool is drying up from HB87 and tighter controls.
labor shortage

Lack of available applicants

Lack of workers willing to work

Larger farmers will pay more to get what workers are available. law of supply and demand

less business

Less migrant workers means you have to pay more to get the ones here. Bidding war between farmers

Less prospects = higher dollar demand for ones in pool

Less qualified workers seem to be available in our area

Less workers

LESS WORKERS - HIGHER DEMAND

May have to offer higher hourly wages to keep good workers

Medical insurance will cost more due to Federal Government Real

Migrant labor is leaving the state because of new immigration law

Migrants are leaving and local workforce cannot and will not do the labor

More competition for fewer workers

More expensive and more difficult to find workers

More expensive due to cost of living increase

Most of the migrants workers have left our area and what few are left are going to pick the highest paying jobs.

My people have been with me for 12-15yrs. Their pay rate increases slightly each year, workers taking on more responsibility, cost of living, Etc.

New immigration law will continue to shrink the number of good worker available

New Law

No need to hire

Not enough help

NOT ENOUGH HISPANICS TO CHOOSE? AND TRAIN.

Not enough legal workers

not hiring

not sure if we will still be in business

not sure of economy/market conditions

Not sure what to expect in an election year with high fuel prices and what kind of money (disposable income) our current potential customers will have or even want to spend.

Obama Care

Once the economy improves and more jobs become available farm labor will be harder to find overall, the available workforce is small due to the current immigration laws in place. Therefore most workers will demand more pay or move to better paying jobs.

Overhead labor costs have gone up due to the current labor force yielding less efficient workers

Paying more salary to attract and maintain qualified employees.

per hour rate is already established

Plan to raise wages if crop outlook is good. Unable to do so this year due to drought & heat problems on crops.

Pool of qualified workers is getting smaller while demand is rising.

Probably more expensive due to the lack of experience workers and the growing industry at bee keeping

Raises, etc.

Refer to answer 32. As long as the government continues to pay healthy people NOT to work, employers will continue to struggle to find laborers.

Reflected by increase in cost of living

Regulations and raw material costs increasing price of finished goods up. Labor costs will also increase.

Rising taxes, workers comp. ins, minimum wage increases, health ins. increases, etc.

Rules & regulations

See answer line 23

Short labor pool

Supply and demand

Supply and demand!!

Taxes on employer

taxes, potential health care expenses, increased insurance premiums. Retaining current employees with raises, benefits.

the aver for h2a is 9.11 and usually goes up each year

The Hispanic workforce that is still here will want more because there are not as many now.

The migrant workers are learning Georgia

The ones I have to hire and pay more will have greater knowledge of the plant material I grow

THE ONES TAHT ARE LEFT DEMAND MORE MONEY

The price of survival is going up at the super market. Everybody needs a higher wage since energy cost went up at the pumps 400% when Katrina hit. The pumps immediately took 10% out of company gross budget and it looks like we are losing another 10 to 15% to tires-repairs-supplies etc. In my line of work it is very hard to increase prices fast enough to keep up with the additional liabilities created by energy cost.

The production/manufacturing jobs that I have available have a set standard rate of pay.

The system is broke & the government will not listen to the farmer / Nursery owners to how to fix it.

There are fewer immigrants available to choose from

There are less local workers willing to do agriculture related work

There will be less workers, so they will be able to demand a higher wage

There will be very few farm workers available - People will get into bidding wars

These new Georgia laws have ran all of our help to other states. BAD BAD BAD since Governor Deal has taken over. I am a registered Republican but this problem for the little people has to be solved.-please help quick

Things change

Unless American Labor goes back to work, there will be bidding wars for documented Hispanics.

unless prices go up for cucumbers we are unable to pay any more

Using regular labor has so much turn over

Wage freeze to hold costs down

Wages are higher

Wages keep rising - Net to gross at dairy is expected to be lower

We are not hiring-have a full time staff

We can't afford to increase wages given the uncertainty with the current rate of the economy and potential effect related to the current drought,

We continually run ads for workers and end up going through many people to hire 1 or 2. People applying for this work think it is easy and when it proves not to be they leave. Also, new hires have displayed a problem with tardiness or no transportation even though they indicated they had dependable transportation during the interview. So in short, we are continually searching for good employees, which is costing us more.

We have adequate staff (employees) to work on our farm. We farm (row-crop) year round (4500 acres). We plant canola & wheat as winter crops; sunflowers, corn, & soybeans as summer crops. We need employees year round.

We have depleted state Unemployment Reserves-that tax will go up as well as insurance and health care fuel, and all commodities associated with our business.

We have to be competitive with our salaries

We have to offer more money to get them to come.

We might not have anyone to hire

WE prefer to work around the houdicafe of our current employees rather than take a chance on someone looking to work long enough to qualify for unemployment, worker's comp, or find out they don't want the long hours and hard work expected from farm labor.

we should have same workers as 2011 or same amount of worker as 2011

We use minimal labor outside the partnership. When help is needed, a friend is called. These friends work to earn money.

We will be using the H-2A program & due to its restrictions & requirements it will be much more expensive

We will have to hire 3 to 4 American workers to do the job of 1 immigrant worker. Also, medical costs are rising.

We will have to test drive a lot of domestic workers before finding those who meet our production criteria and enjoy the job. Training costs will be exorbitant. Errors will occur on client properties from unskilled domestic worker. These will have to be paid for by the company. The cost of doing business is about to become ridiculous, and may not be worth it.

We will need to mechanize more in our operation. many of the migrant work are leaving

we will not prepare a crop for harvest if we do not have the assistance of labor force to gather it.

We will still be paying same \$ for piecework, but are concerned about qualified pickers with correct paperwork showing up when harvest is ready.

Where will they come from?!

With added laws, regulations and fuel cost, everything is going to be more expensive.

With new laws in force it will be almost cost prohibited.

with poor economy; people are wanting and needing more money

With the H2A Program the wages normally increase some each year.

With unemployment where it is, we should have a lower hourly rate we should be able to pay, but now the USDOL wants to dictate to me what wages should be for someone with no experience and that wage is higher than all my operations employees who have been with us for 3 years! Why?

Workforce is getting less & less with people willing to work on farms. This industry isn't easy farm work is very hard & demanding it isn't like building a house you have to be here we can't wait and get out and look for good help on a short notice

Yes, because prices for services have to be raised. This then leads to jobs being lost. People can't afford to pay more in a bad economy.

You need to tax them and increase in wages to keep them, because of shortage help.

you never know from year to year

Appendix H- Responses to Question 34

Please rate your level of interest in hiring a legal workforce

@ 9%+ unemployment there should be an adequate labor force, as a nation we have demeaned manual labor & cuddled those who refuse to do it!!!

A legal workforce is the most desirable but wiliness to work is also necessary

A legal workforce would be a stable workforce

A successful company cannot depend on illegal workers for its work force.

About 20% of our work comes from government projects that require us to be enrolled in the E-verify program. With that said it is very important for us to hire a legal workforce

All farms should have to treat workers equal - If you take out taxes on locals - Hispanics Labor should also have to pay to use benefits the same as locals.

all my workers now are legal

All workers should pay into the same system; taxes, social security, healthcare. I also believe the 40 million Americans not paying taxes should be forced to pay.

All workers should pay into the same system; taxes, social security, healthcare. I also believe the 40 million Americans not paying taxes should be forced to pay.

Always would prefer legal workers when available

Americans what do farm labor to lazy

As long as Congress continues to buy votes by offering everything to illegal immigrants and people who work the system, this country will not survive.

Because it's the law

Because we are a law abiding citizen. We would hire locals, white, African American, Mexican if they were willing to work. Most folks want a check without doing any work!!!

Best workers I have ever employed were removed by INS for being illegal.

Corporate HR policy extreme importance to hire documented legal workers.
cut less difficult

Depending on cost.

Do not need illegals in US costing tax payers money.

Do not want to break laws

done need people that long or full time

Everyone wants to work within the law - However our Gov. Allowed industry to be built around an adequate migrant workforce & now the laws are against them and me as a Blueberry Farmer.

Farmers already know we have yet to find legal's who can do the work migrates can in the farming industry. If we hire legal's it has to be cost feasible or the farmer cannot make a living farmers dont need to be in the renting business or transportation business. We need a temporary work program where workers pay taxes.

Fearful of I9 audit.

for full time employees I prefer to hire Americans or Mex. if they are legal & speak adequate English

for the packing shed (seasonal) I much prefer Mexican - Legal but not H2A. I do not want to be tied to that salary, housing, transportation & general babysitting.

Have a desire to abide by the law. A legal work place is more likely to be permanent

Having done it before, I do not believe the h2a program can be reformed sufficiently to work... The state does not have the authority to implement one. I see no indication that anything will be done on the federal level to help us.

Honestly, legal workforce wants more money. Not to mention many today don't have the work ethic to work in my industry.

How much would it cost?

I already have a legal workforce

I always have proof of citizenship with a social security card and 2nd form of I.D. when living.

I ALWAYS MAKE SURE EMOPLYEES ARE LEGAL.

I am always interested in hiring a good knowledgeable workforce

I am not going to knowingly hire an illegal immigrant. We need to send them back where they came from.

I am very pleased with my employees I have now, both myself and they would love to be legal and it would be much better, but I want to retain them. Both parties are extremely loyal to one another on this farm.

I believe in going by the book and doing what is right we need to have legal qualified workers to pull from.

I do not use migrant workers. I have a mechanized Row Crop operation.

I do not want to lose my labor during my busy season.

I do not want trouble with immigration authorities

I don't care as long as work get done

I don't mind hiring legal workers if they can do the job.

I don't not knowingly break the law.

I don't want to break the law in order to farm

I DONT WANT TO HIRE & TRAIN ILLEGALS AND THEN THEY GET SENT BACK

I don't want to risk the hassle of dealing to federal/state regulators

I feel that we should only have those pests that one documented and well and want to pay taxes.

I have always tried to live within the law

I have been farming for 45+ years, and there are very few legal (Local) people who want to work in the field & will complete the job efficiently. Each year there are fewer and fewer.

I have no intention of hiring an illegal workforce

I have no problem working locals, but they need to know what the laws are going to be. I have no problem working some contract labor out of Mexico but I don't want to be forced to hire anybody who walks up.

I have no trouble. Finding help people will work if you pay a good wage.

I have to answer 1 or 5. As for a legal work force the employees that best compete for the job are legal in my mind(opinion)

I just wish the American workers were as motivated and anxious to work!

I like to abide by law

I like to be legal...however the definition of "legal" needs to be redefined! The new law is very damaging to all types of production....I wish I could hire the children of our State Legislators....oops that won't work - they were too good for public schools much less blue collar menial work!!!!!!

I like to obey the law

I like to work within the laws and hire legal residents.

I need good hard workers.

I need to use immigrant workers who are legal. I do NOT need trouble from the INS. Farming is difficult at best & having legal, willing workers makes it more hopeful to stay in business.

I never hire illegal immigrants or migrant workers

I only believe in hiring legal workers, regardless of origin or race. I check all applicants for legal status.

I only hire citizens

I only hire legal workforce

I only need two full time employees at the most. I have not had any trouble finding reliable local labor.

I only want to hire "legal" employees, but there aren't any that want to work.

I really want legal workers. But when I have to deal with numerous Americans that do not want to work and a government that wants to dictate how I run my business and all the red tape required to get HB-2 visas it is extremely frustrating. It's also frustrating when I have to compete with companies who just throw their arms up and hire illegals because they are tired of trying to deal with it.

I think all workers should pay taxes

I think that is optional to have a legal workforce. However, there are few that are legal that will do the physical work. It is also very inefficient to process the employers first. That is why I am in the middle.

I think we should close the border and just increase the number of seasonal workers allowed in as needed.

I think you need to control Illegal's but when the fruits are ripe you have to get it harvested pronto

I want a legal workforce; however my living depends on labor so whatever it takes to obtain workers

I must do.

I want all of my workers to be "legal". I do not want to violate the law

I want legal workers. Cannot afford to pay penalties for illegal help.

I want my Mexican workers to be made legal, Not a citizen

I want people that will work, not people that constantly complain about minimum wages.

I want QUALIFIED RELIABLE help along with the LEGAL aspect of that! the work we do is HARD & not just anyone can handle it.

I want staff members who will stay without living in fear

I WANT TO DO THE RIGHT THING

I want to hire legal/american workers because I want the dollars to go back to our community

I want to keep the law. I like to go to bed a night with piece of mind.

I will never hire Illegal workers. Even if it raises profit.

I will not risk my financial future & assets on illegals! Does the work illegal mean anything to the government?

I would be very interested if they would work. Unfortunately, with our current unemployment benefits, they know they don't have to work and most are unwilling to perform physical labor

I would enjoy the peace of mind knowing I am in the right

I would hire fellow Americans but they do not want to work on the farm getting crops in.

I would like for the people we use to be in a work program making them legal.

I would like to be able to hire a legal worker

I would like to hire legal workforce, but no American will do the physical labor. They say in Mexico welfare is you don't work you don't eat. Maybe if we let some people go hungry for a little while you wouldn't have this problem with immigration

I would love to hire only legal workers, it is very difficult to do that and stay productive these days.

I would love to know I could hire a legal and local work force that would show up to work.

I would love too but I do not know to get them legal

I would not like to hire illegals

I would only hire legal people to work for me - no matter what!

I would rather use an American citizen when available

I would want my entire workforce to be legal

I'd like to have a reliable workforce

If current immigration law is enforced in July 2013 we would have a high level of interest

If I have to comply with immigration reform this is a major concern, if buildings industry turns around

If needed

If the legal workforce included Hispanic workers who are much more efficient than most American workers

If they are willing to do #32

If workers could be given a legal visa to work, we'd hire them.

If you have work to do you need to hire it

I'm retired. I just produce horse quality Bermuda hay. I hire a self-employed person to harvest the hay

I'm sick of the problems that come with this issue, but as I'm sure you've heard a thousand times try finding someone from here with the same work ethics.

I'm somewhat interested, but all the local people (legal) say they want to work but if they last more than one day its very surprising.

In our type of business not needed.

Interested but find very few applicants willing to do the jobs that we have available.

Interested in qualified and willing workers. I would rather comply with the law but don't really care if workers are legal or not.

It is very important to us, we don't want to spend time and money training them just to find out we can no longer employ them.

It is very important as a sophisticated business to be able to hire a legal workforce. We are willing to incur the expenses to higher legal labor. We already incur payroll expenses for our workforce so not much would change. If it were available, we would be the first in line. The problem is that the domestic labor market cannot support our industry due to lack of knowledge, experience and interest.

IT ONLY MATTERS FROM THE STANDPOINT OF LEGALITY. I PERSONALLY DONT CARE IF THEY'RE LEGAL OR NOT. THE ISSUE FOR ME WOULD BE LOSING THEM AND/OR BEING PENALIZED.

it would be less expensive to hire

It would be nice to have workers that were legal and not be nervous all the time.

I've done everything I can to hire legal workers and paid dearly for it. Migrants are NOT taking American jobs in Agriculture.

Just because a person is legal does not make them a good worker. I need capable & willing workers

legal workers + no fines/gov't harassment

Legal workers are Americans that won't work - are not qualified - won't follow instructions and generally a bunch of well ged government dependents - if I have to hire them then we will shut down entire farm

Legal workers don't want to do farm labor

Legal workers only are considered

Legal workforce demands more money. Legal workers exploit the system.

Legal workforce not an issue when compared to workforce (prefer the legal but do not have that option)

Legals don't want to work

Legals largely white and African Americans have no motivation or necessary skill to much like running a recovery program.

Local people do not work well handling equipment. Do not want to work hours ag + ag business work,

Most people Do Not Want This type work

My objective is to only hire legal workers

My work-force is relatively small (3 full-time) (1 part-time), and does not change much.

NEED WORKERS

Need workers that don't have to be afraid

No concerns regarding immigration laws

No Need

No one should be hiring illegal workers. There can be no rationalization to do so.

Not Applicable

Not hiring!

not needed

not reliable no experience no pride in their job no tolerance level for the hard labor harvesting vegetables require in 90-100 degree weather

NOT TRANSIBLE OR WELLING TO DO ANY PHYSICAL WORK.

Obey the law

Of course we would want to hire "legal" workers but our experience is that the unemployed in America (DoL worker) do Not want to do this hard farm work!

One word "Legal"
only criminals like to be illegal!

Only need additional help occasionally

Our employees are of the Hispanic nationality but they maintain legal documentation. But if I was not able to use these employees because of them not being able to continue their worker permit/status my business would be in trouble!!

people do a better job if content

People do not want to do this type of work even if I paid \$50/hr

Quarterly of work performance by illegal workers appears to be unmasterable by most of the legal applicants that have applicants that have applied to work.

reduces the amount of paperwork for employer

Same answer as #33

since WE WOULD LIKE FOR THE ENTIRE WORKFORCE TO BE LEGAL BUT WE ALSO ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE REALLY WANTING TO WORK. I'M THANKFUL FOR THE HISPANIC (PERMANENT) WORKERS I HAVE - LEGAL OR ILLEGAL.

Some of the crew leaders are not certified legal but have to use them when crop has to be harvested.

Stability

take care of local folks who will work

Takes the worry out of getting our cows milked

The American born white/black will not perform the type of labor my industry requires. The Latino population in the state needs to be legalized, or, at the very least documented in such a way that they are no longer "illegal". Period, end of story.

The American will not do this kind of labor.

The Government needs to provide a legal path for the workers who are willing to do the work.

The immigrants are definitely more dependable for seasonal work than locals and seem to enjoy field work better. They also have much better work ethic.

The opposite would be illegal. Illegals take more out of the system than they bring in. Not to mention they are here illegally.

The problem will be dependability as well as productivity

the thing to do
They need to be legal

This is important to our economy as a whole

To be a good citizen of the state. 2 need drivers.

To comply with Local-State-Federal Rules

Too much paper work

UNDECIDED

UNTIL RECESSION IS OVER WE NEED VERY LITTLE HELP

VERY INTERESTED

Very much if I could find quality employees

Very much interested. Problem is as stated earlier, the Americans coming through the door can't pass a drug test, won't show up for work, don't work when they do, etc. Can't begin to tell you how disgusted I am with the quality of the American worker.

Want to hire legal workforce but with Farm experience within last few years

want to work with framework of the law

We always want to be legal in our business, but we have been an also to get workers without having to get migrant workers.

We are very interested in hiring legal workforce. it is very important to us to give the legal citizen an opportunity to work.

We do background checks now on 100% of prospects.

We do hire legal, and think the law should be enforced.

We do not hire unless applicant can provide qualified documents for the I-9 form

We don't care who does the labor as long as it gets done and done right in a timely manner.

WE don't use many illegals, but we understand many Ag. Buss. Need this workforce.

We don't wish to exacerbate the illegal immigration program; e-verify will mandate a legal workforce

We E-verify all new hires

We have ALWAYS followed federal hiring guidelines. If people use false documents to procure employment, who should be responsible? Without a doubt, employers have to pay for this every day. When loyal, skilled staff members are found to be illegal and deported, the employer suffers tremendously. I know of one specific case where a man was deported for being drunk at his own home. He supervised 60+ employees at a factory. When he disappeared, there were serious workplace accidents. Productivity was lost. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were lost through errors and poor maintenance on the equipment. The one man made that big of a difference in his job!!!! The result: higher prices to the end consumer. The madness will continue until the government documents the people who are here to let them continue to work, keep our prices reasonable, pay taxes, and contribute to their communities.

We have always hired legal workers only. But we understand the appeal to hire illegal workers for less expense on company & increased production

We have employees whom have been with us from 3-30 years. We would like to see a program which would give us and them an easy and reliable method of assuring their status.

We have never hired an illegal worker and don't have any intentions of doing do.

We have never used Hispanics

We must have a work environment that supplies legal workers, with no room for illegals.

We need to be able to hire workers that are willing to work when the crap is ready to hauled not people that are sent to a job because there is nothing else available.

We only hire Americans.

We only hire legal workers. H2A program is too complicated and too many hoops to go through if you only need 3-5 seasonal workers.

We only hire legal

We should all comply with the law

We use e-verify and have used it for 3 years

WE USE SEASONAL MIGRANT WORKFORCE DURING THE WINTER MONTHS TO HARVEST THE TREES. I USE A CONTRATOR.

We want a 100% legal workforce, this is one of the reasons we will be implementing H-2A

We want a legal work force with work visas, pay taxes, not living in fear of the law legal drivers. It's about work not immigration

We want all employees to be legal

We want to hire all legal employees but the gov't makes it impossible to do so with a broke system.

We would hire them if they existed. Many of locals are not willing to do the work required - in the speed required - in the weather & conditions required - with the attitude required

We would love to hire a legal workforce that would actually and be productive

While most people want to operate within the bounds of what is legal, the current system is out of touch with the reality of a service based economy,

Who really WANTS an illegal workforce?

Why would people choose not to? Good employers will always get the best workers

With the H2A program, we can get sufficient employees who are here legally. There are men & women wanting to work who are here as American citizens. We are employing them individuals

Would be nice, the guys that are not legal tend to be the hardest workers but you can't have them

Would give me one less thing to worry about

Would like to hire all legals and we are trying to do this.

Would love to IF!!! they will work most will not

Would only need if we decided to expand

Would rather hire all legal work force but it is difficult to find people who want to do manual labor for a long day

Appendix I- Responses to Question 35

What concerns do you have about hiring a legal workforce on your farm/operation for the upcoming season?

Lack of legal workforce availability -Quality of legal workforce pool

1) Legal migrants / H2A no concerns about work they will work. 2) DOL or local workers - do not want to work - max. time is approx. 1 week & late to work and will not meet production of harvesting.

Do not wish to worry about I.C.E Raid Do not believe in Rewarding people who are here Illegally. Hire Americans 1st!

In 2007, we were short help & called the DoL. 10 workers needed for 30 days or more. Workers were picked up by us – they worked poorly for 3 hours & began complaining about the heat & requirements were “exhausting”. They quit after 3 hours & demanded to be returned to their low income housing. We spent days looking for help... produce ultimately was left in the field to rot.

A legal workforce at this entry level position of manual labor typically is not willing to work. We hired about 15 people in 2011 that came to work for less than 1/2 day. we had 4 that actually worked or 2 weeks(when they wanted) would not work Sat & Sundays

All our labor for this operation is local people and U.S. Citizens

Already doing it.

America it will not work!!! Convicts no!!! Hatians will not work!!! did not work in 2011 season H2A cost, timing on getting them here, paper, paper work, and all the negative things! Believe me, we farmers have tried to work legal workers and have found not only will we starve, so will the Americans when we can't get out product to market

Americans don't want to work

Americans want to know exactly how many & which days they are going to work & they want the same starting and quitting time each day. Migrant workers understand that every day & every week is different, especially @ harvest

Americans will not do this work for any amount of pay. Most can't keep a driver's license, pass a drug test, or be on the job as needed

As Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Black should have been informed of the devastating effect H bill 87 would have on those of us with labor needs before the bill was passed. I, personally, expect that only blackberry business which generated nearly 1 million dollars in 2011 will be a complete loss. I'll have to abandon it. We will try some mechanical harvesting in blueberries but there are a lot of problems with that. For example, loss of quality, loss of yield, mortality of bushes due to damage, loss of the fresh market because of quality- I expect my revenues to at best 1/3 of this year and I may be lucky to get that. As a longtime republican, I am outraged that no one in our party stood up for us. The damage to the state of Georgia's economy will be huge. I am on the board of our blueberry co-op and have an

opportunity to be in Michigan frequently. I have watched them discuss this issue. At least there, the state politicians recognized the importance of agriculture to the collective good.

As I said there are not any nonimmigrants such as American citizens that are willing to work. They don't have any incentive due to so many social programs available and 2 years of unemployment.

As our nation continues to glorify higher education, service jobs become less and less desirable.

Domestic employees in the service sector are a myth. Try to bust that!

asking to be paid too much money for the job

At present too constantly. About half of crop income is paid in labor cost. Farms are afraid if all workers are legal it will cost them even more.

Availability

Availability

Availability

availability and willingness to do labor intense work in tough conditions

Availability of labor; utilizing my current labor; retaining once hired

Availability of interested qualified workforce

Available workers

Availability of workers willing to do required work. (See #32)

Availability, what happens to illegal work force that kids go to school here? We'll be competing against them none in a cash economy.

Because the ones we tried to work this year were lazy. They wanted the pay but would do a half job

Because we hire legal, I sleep well. But it puts us at an economic disadvantage; it is not difficult to comply.

Being put out of business because of not being able to hire a legal workforce to do the hand labor that we do.

Cannot find legal workforce that wants to do the job.

Can't find a legal work force. Local police watch every person with brown skin & chase them down.

Companies allowed to hire non-documented workers have an unlawful advantage in marketplace since they can charge much less with their lower paid but illegal workforce

Concern: Cost!

Concerned with not being able to find and hire the number of workers necessary to profitably run my business

Concerns me. We have a crop that has to be handled with care. It takes about 10 days to train a picker how to do it correctly. Ideally we would have the same pickers come back year after year.

Cost

Cost

Cost more

Depending on the source of the legal workforce. Domestic workers do not work H2A is burdensome, expensive and risky.

Dept. of Labor continues to work against farmers. they think Hispanics take away American Jobs-SO NOT TRUE! Americans (for the most part) WILL NOT WORK ON FARMS. I have to take DOL referrals for 1/2 the contract period i.e- months

Difficult to find and expensive. Also retention could be an issue

Ditto. My concerns are that NO MATTER WHAT YOU PAY, Americans won't show up regularly and don't get the job done when they do. If I could clone the ones I have, I would. But in any given month, I will run 3 or 4 Americans through here and they don't last. Same reasons given earlier. And these are the ones that were screened!

Do not know if enough legal workers exist

Do not like

Documentation required is easily forged.

DONT KNOW HOW TO GET A LEGAL WORKFORCE

Don't know if they will have the same work ethic

Don't need any labor

Everyone is leaving Georgia, legal or not because they are scared of the police.

Everything I just stated; the survival of our nation

Finding a work force that is willing to work in our conditions and long hours and seven days a week.

Finding enough legals

Finding enough workers to do the type work our farm need to be done, it also beneficial for our farm.

Finding good employees is getting more and more difficult

Finding people physically able to do the work

Finding people who care about what they are doing as opposed to those who just want to show up when they feel like it and collect a check on Fridays

Finding people who will work, and take pride in doing a good job

Finding someone who will be willing to preform manual labor.

Finding someone willing to work

Finding them

Georgia's NEW workers laws make it more difficult to use the same labor force I have used in the past. Until the federal Gov. decides to give us a law that makes it feasible to use outside labor we are going to have problems harvesting our crops. GA. NEW law just complicates the issues.

Getting a fine or shutting down the business. Our State Government yet found another way to help small business owners...help them break another law...help make running a small business a step closer to being a criminal!!!! It is bad enough that it can and statistic back this up...will make you broke...but now you can also be broke with criminal records!!!! Nice touch.

Getting anyone not on drugs to do the labor required.

Getting skilled or trainable employees

Good labor has got harder to find for the past year. It was if I had someone to quit there would be someone there that day to take their place, now it takes weeks. The workers now are having family members to go back to Mexico because they are afraid.

government bureaucracy

Government regulations

Great concerns, if the economy recovers we will not have enough labor to meet demand.

H2A

H2A is the only means of hiring a legal workforce. I'm concerned that the H2A program is going to be flooded with new employers that the gov't agencies will not be able to keep up

H2B program is too expensive now. Some bright people decided to raise the labor rate 43%. This is ridiculous.

Hard to fine

Having labor when needed

Hiring immigrants that actually have proper information that checks out on E verify

HISPANIC WORKFORCE HAS ALMOST DISAPPEARED AND LOCAL WORKFORCE IS GETTING TO MANY HANDOUTS TO EVEN CONSIDER TAKING JOBS.

I am concerned that workers will not come

I am convinced that there will not be enough legal workers to do all of the harvest.

I am going to hire legal American workers. If anyone is illegally in the USA they should be considered a spy and executed.

I am very concerned! We have a Governor who put an immigration law into place without even thinking of an Industry which relies on a group to complete tasks that the majority of our society is too lazy to do.

I attempt to verify documentation on all workers; I often worry if these workers are legal

I do not grow crops that need to be harvested by hand labor. Nobody wants to work They want to sit on their porch and draw government WELFARE!

I do not know if the number of legal workers is still available for hire.

I do not know the procedure in hiring immigration legal workforce.

I do, but my competitors do not, putting me at an economic and competitive disadvantage

I don't expect to be able to hire people who are efficient and willing to work hard. Good workers are next to impossible to find.

I don't really have any concerns other than it is difficult to find qualified legal employees in the current workforce. We e-verify every employee that comes through over system that we hire.

I fear that the Hispanic labor force may avoid Ga. thus causing a frantic bidding war during our harvest season for legal harvest/packaging labor

I have been in the landscaping industry for over 20 years. I have been on my own for 2. I lose jobs I bid because I am hiring legal qualified workers. I KNOW of local landscape companies that on large jobs hire illegal laborers. I am not only having to pay benefits, insurance, etc for mine, but also compete against companies paying a laborer \$8 / hr. cash at the end of the day. Where they go home to their house of 15 people and live. I try to provide a good workplace for legitimate employees who pay taxes, buy homes, and have families. Illegal laborers are way too accessible and used for good jobs / projects. It is

frustrating knowing when you put in a bid for someone on a decent project that I compete against falls who are not legal. Thanks

I have many concerns - 1: I cannot hire locals, as they don't want to work. They really don't have a work ethic. College has bred 'getting dirty work' out of our society. If nobody will do farm labor, how will we get food??!? 2: Immigration laws must be changed to allow willing immigrants to come to GA to work with a work VISA - legally. 3: I need to be able to hire day/weekly labor on demand!

I have no concern because if they are not legal they need to go home!

I have no concerns about hiring a legal work force. Most of the work is being sub contracted to an illegal work force by larger companies.

I have no concerns other than it is critical for my operation that I have a dependable, productive work force.

I have no problems in hiring qualified legal workers as long as they are motivated and reliable

I have seen it tried to many times by others. These Americans will not work. They had no desire because the farmers can't compete with the government checks Americans are receiving.

I have two concerns with the H2A. The first is the cost. Actually, they immigration reform will help this problem. I know that sounds crazy, but let me explain.

I haven't had the first legal white worker come to me wanting a job to pick vegetables in 11 years of growing vegetables. My expectations are even lower now of legal white American workers.

I hope we will have a need to hire. Does not look good for now. IF we need to hire, I do not believe there is a force to hire from. we used to have 2-3 come by looking for work in past. not anymore. No one is looking for this type of work.

I NEED WORKERS WHO ARE DEPENDABLE, HARDWORKING, AND IN GOOD PHYSICAL HEALTH WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THE INDUSTRY.

I use H2A

I want to operate correctly

I will not be able to compete with other industries with salary & benefits. Profit margins are almost non-existent in this industry & economy & people will only pay so much.

I will not have enough to harvest my crops. Our local; economy relies heavily on blueberries. There are local banks that will suffer if the blueberry industry staggers.

I would be more than happy to hire a legal work force if they would just be more than happy to work!!

I WOULD RATHER THE WORKERS BE LEGAL. but, WHEN THEY BECOME "LEGAL" PAY REQUIREMENTS GO UP AND PERFORMANCE GOES DOWN.

If it were simple and they were allowed to pay into the system, they are willing. They distrust the government because of the double standard that exists.

If the employer is required to check for employee being legal, concern that empl ID/ paper work falsified

If they are American, will they work hard and stay long term.

If they have a work ethic and will actually work

If you have a legal workforce, they are probably not going to be Hispanic which means they typically are not going to work as hard

I'm afraid that the work will not get done like it does right now. I have experience with white American workers that cannot get the job done.

I'm concerned that there will not be enough

I'm concerned that they will not be available

I'M MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN HAVING PRODUCT DEMAND AND PEOPLE HAVING JOBS THAN WHETHER FARM LABOR IS LEGAL OR ILLIGAL. HISPANICS AREN'T STEALING JOBS FROM AMERICASNS IN THE AREA OF FARM LABOR; THEY ARE THE LABOR MARKET PURE AND SIMPLE!

Immigrant labor can't be found any longer. Local labor won't do the work

In the past 11 years out of a hundred or more full time, part time, temp, and day labor's theres one group that gives the least problems - Hispanic

In the past we have hired people with good "appearing" papers only to find later that their social security numbers weren't good.

Increased costs and losing our competitive advantage with our competition who are still hiring illegal immigrants.

Inefficiency

It is becoming more difficult to keep up with what constitutes "legal"

It is crucial to have the ability to hire a legal workforce

It's going to be hard to get legal workers in the fields.

It's hard to find an honest legal worker that is willing and able to do the work we have. I would love to have enough business to justify hiring anyone instead of cutting down & burning product that has taken years to year.

It's hard to find people who are willing to take these jobs.

It's impossible

It's VERY frustrating, expensive, and the goal posts keep being moved by my government. New requirements for H2-B, a state DOL who make me respond to interested applicants for a \$9/hr job who lives 2-6 hours from my location, processing that is so slow that all the visas are gone by the time my paperwork gets there. How do I tell the workers I have now that I must lay them off because I can't grow my business without employees that my government won't allow me to get legally?

just because they are legal does not mean they will work. The issue is not legal or illegal to most producers. it is whether workers do harvest work for a harvest wage

Labor costs, productivity along with attitude and conscientiousness

Lack of people willing to do hard manual labor

Lawsuits

Legal immigrants do the work that local Georgians no longer want to do no matter what the wage is.

Legal locals don't want to work.

Legal tree workers are diminishing, not increasing.

Legal workers will would increase cost of production - not because of more pay but because they will NOT work like my son and I have to

Legal workers, willing to work in in climate conditions are difficult to find. We have a crop in the field and hell bent to harvest it. What would you do? Next year we can assess our position, and prepare accordingly.

Legal workforce is too dependent on govt benefits - welfare, food stamps, etc. and are no longer willing to work - this also includes Hispanic workforce that is legal.

Legal workforce will not work in field conditions

Less productive.

Limited job applicants that are willing to do the jobs we have available.

Local legal workers are not available in needed numbers and lack interest in Agriculture jobs at even \$15-18/hr. with production requirements

Locals seem to not require the work ethic to endure the season. They start and usually quit or terminate after a short time.

Major concerns with laws that are being passed by the out of touch politicians

MAJOR, THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IS A DISASTER. AGRICULTURE IS A DIRTY NAME.

Majority of workers are nervous about being detained and deported. We are told by state not to hire illegals which we try to do. At the same time illegals can get medicine & other federal program benefits.

Doesn't make sense.

Make the Hispanic workers legal, and then there will be no concern

many

Many legal migrants are leaving Georgia fearing the new immigration laws and overzealous law enforcement.

maybe having to quit dairying!!!!

More workers are leaving area due to lack of work

Most are lazy and unproductive

Most legal prefer to get unemployment in lieu of 10/hr jobs working outside

Most likely will increase hourly pay rates

Must be legal

My concern is HAVING a workforce

My concern is that the person hired is paying the proper taxes into the system.

New immigration bill will reduce the number of applicants. Born in US citizens will not/have not ever filled the void. We need legal immigrants for our temporary positions.

New workers don't understand job

No concern we do not hire illegal workers

No concerns at this time, since our market demand for ornamentals is flat. No business expansion planned for the foreseeable future.

No illegals apply at our nursery, no Hispanics that is

none

None

none available/ American citizens won't do this type of work

None, we need a legal work force. We need to fix our work visa program. we would not hire a legal to work if there was legal workers available. People would not risk everything and pay to cross the border if there was no work for them and could do it legally

None. There are plenty of legal workers in my area

Nor enough legal workers

not available when needed.

NOT CONCERNED AT THIS POINT ALTHOUGH SOME OF MY CLIENTS ARE EXPERIENCING LABOR ISSUES IN THE SOUTHEASTERN U.S. THIS COULD KILL MY BUSINESS.

NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE

Not enough qualified people to work. We have high unemployment, but as long as we are paying them to stay home, and eat with food stamps, etc. Why would they want to go to work?

Not enough workers to do job. Not skilled or motivated

Not fully understanding who is legal and who is not. The new law is complicated.

Not going to be anyone willing to perform this type of work.

Not sure as I mentioned earlier, that American (illegal) can do the work. Not to mention the Hispanics that's come to live here in America, have fallen to the ways of American. (lazy).

Not very many out there who will do manual labor for what the market that is full of illegal workers will.

NOTHING SPECIFIC

Number of people and are they good workers.

Only interested in legal workers.

Our competition is not "playing by the rules" when they hire illegals

Our concerns continue to be the same. Legal workers from experience have trouble keeping up which slows down operations causing us to lose money and sometimes the job. Also, our comp claims go up with legal workers. Most of the time injuries are suspect. Safety inspections find us in compliance.

Our legal local workforce is not dependable and will not work if giving opportunity

Ours is a very small wholesale/retail nursery, and we are getting even smaller in this stagnant economy. I don't have the same needs for a workforce, legal or otherwise, as a thriving operation. We have struggled over the past two years or so in our small business and in our household as well.

People don't want to work

People to do our work in the hot temperatures.

Prevalence of fraudulent documents presented

Price of labor being so high it would not be profitable to harvest our crops. Being forced to hire local labor that have no incentive to work or work safely. No work ethics or desire to be productive. They may work long enough to quit and get unemployment or get hurt and want permanent disability.

Price of labor being too high it would not be profitable to harvest our crops. being forced to hire local labor that have no intention to work or work safely. no work ethics or desire to be productive. they may work long enough to quit to get unemployment or get hurt and want permanent disability

Qualified workers. Higher minimum wage

Qualified / Trainable Willing to work

Quality and work ethic

Quality of employees available for my industry

Reliable, Honest

Rules & Regulations make it too complicated

Not enough qualified applicants who are willing to work. This is a societal problem that will not be easily fixed. Most State & Federal Law makers don't have a clue about the real world!

Same as above

See if they are legal or not. How you go by seeing if someone is legal
That the Latino pool will have moved on to Latino friendly states/will not be here!!

Show up on time be responsible be honest Work hard Have a good appearance
Smaller labor force will be available in 2012

That their documentation is authentic

That their documentation is Authentic.

The availability of workers!

The concern is going to be for the following year with e-verify. Why does the burden of have to be placed on the employer.

The cost.

THE GOOD WORKERS ARE HISPANIC. I CANNOT FIND AMERICAN WORKERS CAPABLE OF THIS WORK.

The H2A requirements which change every year.

The H2G program does not work for our company. We use our labor force 12 months a year and in Fayette county provided housing is not affordable.

The illegal work force works much better than the legal workforce

The legal workforce pool is not willing to do the hard manual labor required in our industry

The local people will not do the work or cannot hold out in the field. The non-documented people are leaving Georgia scared of being profiled.

The new laws are driving good workers who are legal away because they are concerned they will be harassed

The ones willing and able to work will be harder to find and more expensive. I will need to raise my prices.

The only way to do this is thru the h2a program. It is very complicated, frustrating and expensive. There is too much red tape and government agencies involved

The only way to do this is thru the H2A program. It is very complicated, frustrating and expensive. There is too much red tape and government agencies involved.

The people I hire say they are legal. They are the only people that really want to work.

The process of bringing H2B workers in to the USA is costly and burdensome. The local pool of workers is not willing to work as hard as the immigrant labor. I have seen this in many SC operations.

The time involved in training & determining if they are: 1) honest 2) hard working 3) willing: is extensive. During this time period someone is having to train them & do their own job as well which doubles the workload. By the end of the hiring period they have quit & the process repeats itself
There are many that have left the state of Georgia even though they are legal.

There are no qualified people to hire. There are many applications but most of these people have never worked more than 6 months at one place.

There are not enough good hard working, drug-free, honest potential employees

There are not enough legal workers that are skilled to do my jobs. I live in a county of 10,000 people and we may need 3000 plus hand pickers. Locals will not get it. Every time (almost) we use local people we have to prop up their wages and they don't last and will not do the hours.

There are not enough workers who want to do the job or who can perform the work.

There are very few available legal workers to choose from, we are having a lot of difficulty filling these positions.

There aren't enough legal work force available for our type operation (Dairying)

There is an apparent lack of qualified applicants in the work pool who possess a legal status.

They are not available. The few American workers that have been hired as replacements do not last more than a week as the landscape business is too demanding for them.

They were not available.

They will not be available and we now have a system where farmers will be competing for labor and workers. We had to raise our prices 1.50 per hour last year and North and South Carolina recruited 1/2 of our people with bonus and no Georgia/Arizona style rules. They actually had people down here telling them to come and they would not bother them in these states.

They won't work

This is not a legal workforce available to harvest handpicked produce. Domestic workers are too slow and cannot produce on a level to even begin anything with hispanic labor with hand harvesting.

This is why I contract help. If they can't legally drive or move freely within community, they can't really be expected to perform

to lazy

Unfortunately, there is no legal workforce who is willing to endure the physical demands presented in landscape construction/maintenance. The positions are not low paying so that is not the problem.

Very concerned because local residents don't want to do manual labor

Very difficult in present environment.

We are seeing less and less applicants as they leave the state for states more expecting.

We cannot find local labor to do field work.

We created this problem by not keeping up with guest workers 25-30 yrs age.

We depend on friends and family of own employees from Texas to recruit and send in sensible workers for sinning season

We have a legal workforce in packing house, but some field workers do not have certified crew leaders. One crew leader promised to get certified before 2012. Majority of his crew is legal.

We have always endeavored to hire and maintain a legal workforce.

We may go out of business because no action is being taken to help American farmers / Nursery Operations

We need people that will work to harvest fruits Americans will not do that I need a dependable crew or I will go out of business

We need to be able to hire H2A people at a reasonable rate and not have to furnish transportation & housing

We need willing, motivated legal workers. They are scarce.

We used legal worker s during our 2011 crop year and had an EXTREAMELY hard time finding reliable workers. Many workers were not ones who would last over a couple of weeks some did not even last beyond one day.

We want to obey the law, but we are not allowed to ask the legal status of new employees. We are concerned about getting our hands slapped after hiring illegal employees unknowingly. We will be stuck using workers that are unable to perform the kind of work required in the dairy industry

What are the new regulations, taxes and cost going to be?

When weeds cannot be controlled by chemical means I have hired Hispanics for a few days. Trouble has come from proper I.D. in regar I.R.S.

Where are the workers? We used to have at least 6 people (Hispanic) coming in our door a day looking for work....of that number, only 1 might qualify for e-verify (which we have been doing for 3 years). Now, we may have 6 a week. No other race of people even bothers to apply.

Whether or not, even the legal workers will be intimidated by the immigration laws and will move from our area. Some don't understand the law and move away because they are afraid.

Who wants to work in this job?1?!?!? America keeps pushing education, education, education. We need to encourage work ethic and the value of an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. The answer doesn't lie in getting a higher education - it comes from a willingness to hold a JOB. I'm afraid that this e-verify mandate will make it next to impossible to hire domestic workers. How will I grow? How will I stay in business?

Workers not available that will actually work. If you don't have fast workers you can't survive

Workers that are legal are very hard to find, also hard to deal with them.

Would like legal workforce but they are not readily available.

Would like to see a guest worker program implemented.

You cannot find legal workers who want to work. They would rather stay home where it is cool and wait for their monthly check to arrive.

Appendix J- Responses to Question 36

Please take this opportunity to provide us with any additional comments about immigration reform in Georgia as it pertains to your operation/industry.

The e-verify system will put the Georgia farmer out of business unless he turns to the H2A program. Your average American Citizen will not perform the type of work we need. It is too hard for them and they are not able to meet production.

-We need a temporary guest worker permit. - Workers need to pay taxes -George Bush had it right - Illegals should pay a fine & apply for citizenship like every other immigrant. -Make it easier for farmers to hire a legal workforce. -H2A like solution will not work

1) Enforce the laws on both illegals & those who hire them 2) Remove Red Tape to get workers here legally. It take so long to get workers here, usually a federal problem

1) send us information on what to do or check if someone is legal 2) How to go about checking the status of legal immigrants

1) To Drive in GA - they should pass a lisc. test here in GA if they wish to live here 2) We cannot support breaking U.S.A. Law 3)Illegals use medical here without paying - we are going to lose our local Hospital because of financial shortfalls 4) They use our school system w/out paying for taxes - which results in our family paying more taxes and farmers usually own a lot of taxable land 5) Build a fence secure the U.S.A boarder 6)A guest worker program that is enforces is the only correct way to help supply seasonal Ag workers.

75% of our workers are non-American. We make every effort to verify they are legal. Should the non-American worker not be available, it would greatly impact our business operation in a negative way, more programs should be offered to help immigrants become legal and receive the documentation they need to work in this country.

A form when finding an excellent employee does not have a social security number a speedy path to obtaining a member so the would be paying into social security to help keep program better funded. Employees can be a big help in making people legal. Lazy ass Americans need good competition. I'm an American I grew up on a dairy farm and I have no problem competing with anybody on this planet. After all we if you are Christian we all are descended from Adam & Eve.

A guest worker program needs to be developed when they are issued a card to come work for 9 months then return home for 3 months. Let them go and come to work, but leave wives and children at home. We have tried white and black workers year after year. They NEVER last more than 2 or 3 days, and never pick enough to make more than minimum wage(usually I have to add \$ to get them to minimum wage). Only the Mexican workers can stand the heat and be productive.

Agricultural jobs are sometimes difficult and conditions are hard. It has been my experience that many people raised in an urban environment are not accustom to this work environment and are unwilling to do the job required on the farm. The pay scale is less a factor than heat, cold, dust, and etc.

AGRICULTURE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A DIFFICULT FIELD IN WHICH TO FIND EMPLOYEES THROUGHOUT HISTORY. IS THIS REALLY A NEW ISSUE? WE THINK NOT. WEHAVE NEVER KNOWINLY HIRED ILLEGAL

IMMIGRANTS. WE HAVE ALWAYS FILED ALL PAPERWORK CORRECTLY WITH DOCUMENTATION. WE HAVE NOT HIRED A NEW EMPLOYEE IN 4 YEARS. HOWEVER OUR EMPLOYEES ARE INCREASINGLY FACING DISCRIMINATION / RACIAL HARASSMENT FROM THE POLICE, SCHOOLS, AND CITIZENS. HOW COULD I RUN A BUSINESS WITHOUT SKILLED WORKERS IF I LOSE MY CURRENT EMPLOYEES? I DON'T SEE A RUSH OF STUDENTS IN THE AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS OF AMERICA.

Agriculture needs a reliable workforce. I understand we have a border problem but the Americans will not do the work at any price. I have tried

All my life I have been common labor. I always wanted to be my own boss. I finally made it 25 years ago. The final 10 to 12 years I worked school labor in the summer then my season for harvest was between June 15 to mid-July. Now my season is April 15 to June one. School is not out and if it was, the kids that drive new cars & trucks don't have to work. I've worked Mexico people the last 13 years. All were legal some were over on work permit. It has been the best thing that ever happened for me
all workers are legal

Any reform that doesn't include a workable, flexible guest worker program, that is also easy to use, is not real reform IMO!

Any workers in Georgia should be legal or have worker immigration papers!

As a small business person, I have been providing jobs for 30 years. I have weathered all sorts of climates and droughts and recessions. I am tired of the government constantly trying to find a way to stop me from progressing. Being in business is hard enough without being considered criminal because you missed judging a prospective employee's heritage.

As an employer, I have to have people willing to work. Most Hispanic employees will work. As a tax payer, I don't like seeing illegal aliens being able to take advantage of programs or for that matter anyone that can't pass a drug test.

as business owner it is hard enough to run a business, make a profit and pay all the overhead without the responsibility of immigration rules being on our shoulders. If we withhold taxes, match the taxes and follow the rules then it should be the govt job to take care of immigration not the employers. If an employee winds up being not legal are you going to refund the taxes an employer pays? Let people who want to work do just that work.

As part of the landscape / nursery industry many of my customers and peers use Aliens as a labor force. Having access to a legal workforce is critical to many operations in this commerce stream

Before you pass laws barring illegals from working be sure you have adequate & willing citizen workers

Bill - 87 caused many workers to by - pass Georgia this season. This caused many farmers not to be able to secure labor resulting in a loss for many farmers. Agriculture labor is used approximately 6 months of the year why not issue an agriculture work visa at the border for 6 months? If so many factories had not hired these workers we would not be having such a problem with labor. This has cut many American workers out of work in factories. Many American workers will not work in the fields because our

government is paying them to stay at home, paying their grocery bill, furnishing them a phone and heaven only knows what else.

Call me and I can tell you how to fix this system, as well as anyone else who owns a nursery. It is not a difficult process.

Certain groups need to be exempt from hiring domestic labor unless they have experience. Law now is ridiculous. 3 migrant workers pick on average 315 bins of tomatoes in one day making average wage of \$12.50 per hour. 137 domestic workers in same field picked 61 bins of tomatoes in some field same day for average pay of \$3.12. We had to guarantee \$9.12. I lost a lot of my crop because I could not cover enough ground. My H2A workers VISA were cut from 75 requested to 35. This is an impossible program the way it stands. Good luck buying foreign produce in coming years. Good old USA politics.

Communication or language barrier

Current legislation is a response to a very vocal and racist minority in the state. The current legislation is inhumane at least, and destructive to an already fragile local economy. I have been a resident of Georgia since 1984 and have always reveled the durability of the Georgia economy. For years Georgia has led the country in economic growth, why dampen things now? The jobs the latinos perform are not jobs native born Georgians will perform. Georgia's legislators should take the opportunity to stimulate the local economy by being progressive and humane in their approach to documenting the latino work force. Why not show the rest of the country how modern and thoughtful we can be here in Georgia instead of backward and bigoted

Current policies have been very detrimental--we need immigration reform with a less complicated guest worker program to do the jobs where we are unable to find qualified applicants. Unfortunately, we have too many unemployed with no work ethics and no desire to do work in agricultural positions.

Currently we are required by one of our largest clients to ensure all employees both full and part time are legal workers. It has been easier for us to approach this requirement through not hiring of H2A workers.

Currently, I am able to find enough workers. Often I have more problems with legal, american born workers (of any race, white, black, hispanic); their productivity is less, their attitude and work ethics are bad, they look for easy money (lawsuits, workers comp claims). IN my opinion, the migrant (possibly illegal) worker does the best job, they just want to work for a fair wage. My fear is if we continue to be hostile and make things more difficult for them we will not be able to get the labor we need for these seasonal, lower paying jobs.

Dear Commissioner Black, If we destroy the good work ethic that these Hispanic laborers currently have, who will we call on next in order to help us fulfill the labor intensive tasks associated with the agriculture & construction industries? I personally believe their job performance will diminish once they are granted access to an of the entitlement programs. Ron Smith

Do it. Offer an amnesty to currently employed non-legal staff. offer realistic work visas (5-10 years) Our industry would not be viable with labor from other countries

Do not use non-citizen on a regular basis - only for a little contract work such as weed pulling

Do to the welfare state, domestic labor is unwilling to work for pay/salary. The difference between the government subsidies and regular pay is so small, it creates the attitude that "why work when the government will pay me to do nothing." The government subsidies have created multiple generations of government dependent people who refuse to work. These people are willing to have very little, if they don't have to work to get it. On the other hand, we have the migrant/immigrant work force that is willing to perform the labor at a fair rate of pay. The immigration reform talk has scared/is scaring all the migrant labor out of the state. The labor available to replace the migrant work force is more expensive, slows down the jobs, and causes issues with workers' compensation increases, all of which results in less profit

Don't always know if the people you hire are legals. Just looking for someone to do the task for the least amount of money

Due to a shortage of legal workers. Farmers will be competing against each other - Some of the crop will not be harvested because of labor shortage and we will spend more money on what is harvested and there will be less money left to maintain our operations & to live on if any is left at all ----- There must be a way to convince the state GOV. and the people of the state that the concerns & needs of GA.

Farmers need to be a part of this conversation!

During our peak harvest people were afraid to come to Georgia

Ease up on the Hispanics. Find a way to make them legal participants without the employer-expense and failed immigration policies of this state and nation.

Employers need to be left alone. We shouldn't be forced to do what the federal or state government can't or won't!!

Enforcing our existing laws used to not be an option in America.

Even though I don't hire foreign workers I believe they should be legal or have a work permit. It's sad that our system has plenty of workers of age that the government has rewarded for sitting at home drawing a check. It started with Pres. Johnson and has gotten worse with time if you cut out welfare-you got plenty of workers.

Every person we employ pays full load taxes out of every single check, as I'm sure most do, I don't understand why NOW, why not 108 years ago when this first started in southern California, can someone explain where the money is going to come from, from the lost medicare, social security when all these payers are gone? Who will make up the difference! Mr. Black, I know this is a politically hot mess, my hope is someone will have the wisdom to do the right thing, I'm not asking for my way, just do what's right, and Georgia really doesn't need any more setbacks.

Excluding non-legal labor will put me out of business

Fair Tax solves the problem!

Farm work should be exempted from the immigration reform laws.

Farmers should not be allowed to grow crops that require the use of illegal immigrants. The increase in the cost of social services, medical, educational-should be paid for entirely by the farmers that grow crops (like onion) that require the importation of a labor force that gets free services at the expense of the tax payers

Federal h2b program is a joke.

Fines forcing illegals out of the state and workforce is a very negative impact to GA agriculture. We need a legal immigrant workforce to remain competitive with other states and countries to get crops harvested. The government created the problem and must fix it. Allow more immigrants to work here legally year round; they are not taking jobs from Georgians that want to work.

First. Thanks to our beloved welfare system there is a certain segment of the people here in the US that will not work. And if they are schooled they go to town to work. (I can't blame them) 2nd. I think GA does not act wisely we as a state will lose a lot of industry. (There are other states that are not so strict) 3. I understand that some employers do not take taxes out of their checks. I think what needs to happen is to place really severe to those who do not and let the rest go free.

From past experience, I realize that unless we have migrant farm workers, there will be no locally grown produce in grocery stores. Farmers will be out of business. All produce that will be available will be imported. Imported produce does not have the quality of locally grown produce. It will affect all of society, not just farmers

Frustration. We continue to run ads and continue to hear from individuals who are either not willing to perform the physical labor or accept the offered wage rate. The congressman from Peachtree City says people are willing to do anything to put food on their table. I respectfully disagree. It is easier to appear to be looking for a job while continuing to receive government assistance. The governor wants our industry to hire probationers to fill these jobs yet the state of GA contracts with a company to hire workers in another country to perform the work of the state. What is wrong with this scenario? Our company will continue to hire a legal workforce that will not be a liability to our company and customers. It is our hope that our state leaders will see the great need our industry has and initiate ways to enable our industry to hire legal workers that will be cost effective for all.

Ga's immigration reform will eventually cost me my farm, or cause me to be a criminal by working illegal immigrants (what's left). Thanks Georgia Goc. for screwing the small farmer

Georgia does not need to make it so difficult for farmers to hire and keep qualified workers who will work in conditions that many refuse to undertake no matter the pay. Frankly many Georgians won't hold up and are unreliable when it comes to Agriculture work. Agriculture requires long hours under not so good conditions especially during the summer. Not many are willing to try and certainly will not hold up.

Georgia has passed a very stringent immigration law. We have work forces who are very reliable and productive. This law is only a scare tactic for our employees who are hardworking, honest, reliable, and who have families who are U.S. citizens. These employees are not trouble makers and the U.S. is the

"only home" most of them have ever known. They come here with parents years ago, were educated here and if deported would have only a foreign country to go to. If these employees are removed from our work force we will have nowhere to find more employees because the local work force will not (refuse to) perform the tasks required in our livestock operation.

Georgia is short-sighted when it comes to the immigration issue. Immigrants are the base of our economy, and allow American citizens to hold higher level positions in management, health care, education, and the justice system. If they live in a government approved dwelling, they pay property taxes that support our education system. (Many of them also drink alcohol, another major contributor to education!) I am so angry that Georgia can't see the consequences to their actions. Following the debacle with the probationers working in the fields, it would seem that lessons have been learned. Georgia can't solve the immigration crisis. We should stop trying. The initial measure of requiring a SSN to obtain a driver's license fell flat. Not a single immigrant left the state because of this. They just continued to live here, making the most of each day, and driving without a license - they have to live, shop work, go to the doctor. That's lost revenue for the state. That's more people who flee the scene of an accident. That's more people without the proper training to operate a motor vehicle. That's more Georgia citizens at risk of injury or death. But it's NOT a solution to ridding the state of illegal immigrants. This new law will have similar unintended consequences. And again, the citizens will be the losers as monies and business opportunities leave our state. Unemployment will still be high. After all, an out of work CEO is unlikely to pluck chickens.

Georgia needs a program to make my ILLEGAL workers Legal workers. Identify them, register them, charge them a fee, place requirements on them, and then let them work. No citizenship; they don't want or need it. I could not operate without these foreign workers. I have worked these same guys for 7-10 years now. They are very loyal and hardworking. I have had some leave because of fear. Please continue to work for a guest worker program. My needs are 12 months/year. H2A does not work for me. Georgians do not want to work on farms. Many feel it is beneath them or why should they work when the Gov pays them not to work. Immigrants want to work, they work hard and make good money. The new Georgia Law is going to be disastrous for Agriculture if it is fully implemented.

Georgia's Ag industry is significantly compromised and put in a competitive disadvantaged position due to some recent state level actions. I would hope our Department of Ag understands these challenges and in the future will do as Florida's Dept of Ag did this past legislative session and strongly support GA's Ag needs.

Gort should look at previous years taxes on those who are here wanting to have a better life and being hired by company who takes taxes out and lets the Gov't know their the companies also workers who want to be documented and be known to do everything right except have legality to be in the usa. These are the people who keep business alive. the whites as well as the blacks have had decades to prove themselves worthy. they simply want a free ride

Government has just as much fault in allow immigration get where it is today. Knowing it was much of what allowed the housing market boom. We were able to get the home we always desired for for fraction of the cost if it were done with American work force, we would pay twice as much. & take twice as long, Our homes were the one asset we had as americans. Due to the economy, we've lost that asset. That causes a change reaction. From improving our homes, lost jobs, lawn maintenance, enhancement

done around the house, etc. My opinion, build the borders, legalize the immigrants fix housing this will cause Americans have confidence again & invest.

H2A way too expensive, need some type of program for workers to become eligible for green card. Local people will never harvest crops too lazy

Have workers come in and work, pay them a fair wage, let them pay social security and return to Mexico. Social Security is for the privilege of working. We gave blacks an opportunity to work and plant onions and they said they could not do it. Who is going to pick the strawberries, beans, sweet potatoes, corn & onions? When you go hungry maybe America will wake up.

Hiring only legal, full-time workers has put me at a disadvantage compared to bigger businesses who are less concerned. As an immigrant myself, I am proud that I went through the legal process of becoming a citizen. However, we need to provide some path to citizenship for those illegal immigrants currently in Georgia. I want them to have some opportunity to attain legal status.

I am a cotton ginning operation that operates in the fall of the year, we run 24 hours a day for approximately 3 months. Finding non-Hispanic workers to perform this work is next to impossible. Not having access to this pool will severely hamper the cotton industry in Georgia, which is a billion dollar industry.

I am a small producer and immigration does not affect my operation. However, there are folks that depend on a workforce to gather crops in a timely manner. I do not know the answer to the situation but it needs to take into account the needs of agriculture producers to gather crops. Wish I could be of more help.

I am all for reform if the government is willing to accept some of the problems related to this illegal workforce in Georgia and throughout the U.S. The government has a long very little to guard our borders and stop illegal immigration, but it is quick to punish an employer if they are caught using illegal aliens in their workforce. The government is laying all of the blame on people trying to build a business that will employ 10's to 1,000's of workers.

I am angry. Not so much in regards to immigration as to the decline in persons actually willing to work period. My workforce consists of legal workers no one else is willing to hire, DUI, drug use and inept at following simple instructions in repetitive tasks. I am willing to pay higher wages to anyone interested in the type work I have to offer - however - that person has to be willing to perform needed tasks and stay off their cell phones talking & texting during working hours. I have an intense dislike of INS for removing the family that worked for me that were the best employees I have ever had. I feel that the availability of "help" from sources informing workers of govt benefits as opposed to work has greatly contributed to the decline of workers available. If we stop making children born to illegal workers citizens of this country I think some problems would be reduced. Govt officials should have to work like we work in the conditions we work in for a short period of time to fully appreciate the challenges we face. We do not abuse our workers, we just expect to see results in a day of labor and would rather not listen to "reasons" why work was not completed. Making our jobs more difficult by requiring endless forms and hoops to jump through to obtain willing workers does not improve our bottom line of profit. I only require 3 full time employees in my business. I just wish those 3 were as easy to find as the DoL seems to think!

I am concerned for the larger nurseries in the industry. Their success trickles down to my small garden center/nursery. As well as ag growers affect food prices.

I am disappointed that some farm organizations (one of which I am an active member) want to keep illegals in this country. If a farmer or a contractor depends on illegals they need to get in another business or find legal workers. These illegals cost me and all the other tax payers billions of tax dollars, and I am tired of it! Maybe the new laws in Georgia, Alabama, and Arizona will make the illegals move back to where they came from. I applaud the Georgia Legislature and Governor for passing immigration reform.

I am not fon of immigration reform. We all came from somewhere else on down the line in our past generations. Immigrant workers keep this country moving just like they did 150 years ago.

I am opposed to all illegal immigration Federal government is responsible for this provision the labor force we rely on for harvest is mandatory for our survival it is not the responsibility of the American people for the health and education etc of illegal immigrants -- they are illegal and therefore have no "rights" They should be provided the same opportunity & route for citizenship as everyone else I am (as time/money permits) converting from handpicked to machine picked We must have a legal "work permit" classification if we are to feed America no one time amnesty for illegal immigrants do what is "right" for America a one time even for politicians

I am sick about how our state is treating the immigrant population.

I am thoroughly convinced Georgia's immigration reform is only a scheme of georgia's corporate lobbyist to put the small farmer out of business where the Tea Party, white corporate georgia will fund private owned farms run like corporations. using labor forces of the H2A program. Georgia Republican senators making possible H2A workers available without any red tape or high cost. Agri business is the backbone of georgia and the immigration workers are the chain the strongest link to any farm in georgia. agri business cannot survive without these diligent workers no farm in Georgia can survive another year like 2011. without the backing of migrate workers. Georgia senators devastated my growing season of 2011, vegetables rotted in the fields because I could not find workers. without care or concern Georgia republican leaders reduced and lessened me a Georgia farmer who was proud to fee America. at 29 years old seventh generation of farming. Senators that has never stepped onto a farm in Georgia disregarded Georgia farmers in the same instance they voted in the Georgia immigration reform. farming is not a job it is life.

I am very concerned about the lack of qualified workers. Immigration reform has scared off good workers. We have been trying to find people who are able to do a good job since the immigration reform movement started in Georgia and have had NO success. I don't know how long our business will remain viable without decent help. Right now, we do a lot ourselves but landscaping is a young person's business.

I believe each year will be more and more difficult to find manual labor

I believe illegals should be deported and not allowed to return. Possibly we should give more assistance to immigrants who wish to be legal and become citizens

I believe the legislature should issue work permits to any illegal alien who has a job for as long as the job lasts and especially you who have a family with their children who are automatically US citizens

I believe they should give field workers a permit to legally work. It is hard to find someone to work long hot days in the field.

I believe we need to hire only legals. However, with the new laws, I believe many illegals have left Ga.

My feelings is that it is not my responsibility to verify if a worker is legal or not. If they are in this country the federal government allowed them to enter they need to take responsibility for allowing them to enter. DO NOT PUT THE RESPONSIBILITY ON MY BACK!!

I believe we should be able to hire non-citizens as long as they pay payroll taxes.

I can see how it may effect the produce industry. As far as on the crop production side there is no problem at all. Produce farmers require a lot of tempoary workers, and local unemployed people are not interested in these jobs. There are plenty of unemployed people in this area I believe its 10.2% these are not going to do manual labor as long as their on unemployment

I completely support immigration reform and believe that if you are in this country illegally, you should not able to take advantage of the benefits pertaining to US citizens. Our industry has been hit hard because now we play the role of ICE by verifying citizenship or authorization to work permits. I am a business man not an immigration official. The federal government has to provide a vehicle for some of these law abiding hispanics who pay taxes (Federal, State, County, sales, etc.) and have no history of breaking the law, except being here illegally. These hard working laborers do a job that very few others want to do. We have been in business for 10 years and rarely have anyone apply for work that is not hispanic. We need to wake up and provide these folks with an opportunity to earn a legal working status in the US if they meet certain qualifications such as a history of tax payments, no criminal record, consistently contributing to their community, etc. We are all immigrants of this country and out relatives all came here to follow the american dream. There is so much read tape now that citizenship is a pipe dream. The hispanic population in this country has done so much for our Agriculture industry, construction industry, manufacturing industry, urban agriculture industry, etc. If any immigrant has avoided paying taxes or abused any government benefits, they should be deported. If they have worked hard and contributed to the success of our economy, we should re-pay them by giving them an opportunity to earn working status and eventually citizenship in this great country.

I do hire immigrant workers and I check papers & documents, fill out all I-9 forms, check social security numbers, collect copies of all supporting documents. All of my employees pay taxes, many have enrolled in medical benefits plan and retirement plans. I would hope that politicians will keep their hands off of productive contributors to our society.

I do not believe in letting someone work for you if they are illegal. How come we teach our children to do what is right & hire illegal people to work on our farms. I would not let my children plant something illegal on our farm. I see no difference in illegal plants & illegal people. Farmers and anybody else can find good help to do any type farm work or any other type work if you pay them a fair wage. If we put legal people back to work we could cut the unemployment down. This is America put America back to work.

I do not hire many workers all live in Burke Co. I do not work foreigners.

I do not use immigration labor because of all the red tape laws, I would like to use migrant workers but it's not worth the hassle. Its looks like the state and the federal govt are trying to do everything they can to put the small farmers out of business, I don't think the farmers should have to enforce the laws they move.

I DONT HIRE ILLIGAL LABOR AT MY GARDEN CENTER, LANDSCAPE / MAINTWNCE CO. OR TREE FARM. THOSE WHO DO SHOULD BE PROSECUTED, FINED, JAILED AND PROPERLY SEIZED.

I don't know the answer to immigration but I firmly believe that the agricultural industry would fold up without illegals. It is just Not true that illegals are taking jobs away from Americans. The government gives out so much free assistance, a lot of Americans don't want to work or work hard

I feel that the focus should be on other priorities like the economy. Keeping terrorist out of the country is important but the folks this law targets are not terrorists. These folks just want a job and to support their families. Some legal method to enter the US should be established to allow documented folks into the country and keep terrorist and criminals our as well.

I have a small ornamental plant nursery and have few problems finding workers. Farmers in south Georgia where I live are having severe work force problems and food is being left in field to rot because there are no workers to harvest it. This will ultimately lead to higher food prices. I recently heard an NPR program on the success of migrant labor in California especially for the grape harvest. If it works in Calif- you can make it work in Georgia too.

I have no problem with hiring wiling/honest people (regardless of immigration status) - I despise paying taxes to support services for non-working non-citizens

I have no problem with labor that is properly documented. I understand the need for a workforce in our agriculture industry that requires a large number of immigrant or migrant workers. However, if they are not legal or trying to go through the proper procedures to become legal - I say go home or send them home - H2A and Vim workers are fine as long as they return to their original homes at the end of the allowed time. I hope that this information is useful

I HIRE ALL LOUD LEGAL CITIZENS IN MY GREENHOUSE OPERATION, PROBABLY ONE OF THE FEW WHO DOES THIS IN GA. WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE A STABLE, WELL COMPENSATED WORK FORCE.

I know individual states are frustrated with all the undocumented workers we have, but they are putting this pressure on the people who feed this country and not on Washington. If the states would collectively put the squeeze on Washington with could come up with a program that would satisfy the needs of the farmers and eliminate the undocumented population this country over time.

I know the contractor I use pays all taxes into ss, unemployment, state & local & the few people i've known as workers accepted that. Unless Americans are willing to accept a drastic reduction in services & available commodities. A fair guest worker system needs to be put in place that doesn't over-burden small businesses

I never hire illegal workers and do not grow vegetables; therefore it does not affect me.

I only have 1 employee, I got him a IIN neenbe and he pays all his taxes. It is deducted from his payroll check

I only hire one or two part time workers, and have no problem getting help. I understand though that there is a serious problem for large farm operations in getting and keeping qualified help. There is critical need of a guest worker program. Many commercial farm operations need seasonal help, many migrants need work. Why not have a guest worker program to match these needs. Don't fine migrants, this implies that they are breaking US laws, many won't cooperate. Instead, why not require a guest worker license permit renewable yearly. This could be useful for (1) tracking migrants, (2) matching workers with labor needs (3) collecting fees or perhaps taxes, and (4) perhaps providing health / education benefits. The number of guest license permits should be no more than the expressed need for such labor. Priority for follow-up applications could be given to those who cooperate with US laws, regulations and those recommended by US employers

I personally lease my farm out; I have heard that many farmers in our area use or have used immigration legal workforce with great success/results.

I put 3 adds in with DOL at suggestions of the governor. Top manager - mid manager - laborers - 1 response in 6 weeks - (25 people DoL sent to me never came.) Our business is labor intensive. Americans don't want to do this work. I need to be able to keep the labor I have as I have trained them & supported their families. Losing some of them would cause much harm. I would like to increase pay, but costs have gone through the roof & water rates are so high that customers are cutting projects.

I recently met Governor Deal at a social function and thanked him for immigration reform in GA. It has elevated our profession because our competitions who hired illegal workers no longer can

I see a need for immigration reform. Immigrants that have no criminal record and have skills helpful in our workplace. Should be allowed a temporary work visa that can be renewed or revoked when appropriate. Georgia will have a great data base of immigrants, residents, county, city, work skills related to the many Georgia constituents needing farm or Agriculture workers. Must be some type of national initiative to prevent flood of immigrants to our great state. all criminals deported. The Agriculture industry has the most to gain or loss. I am a Great supporter of Gary Black because he believes in other people and their opinions. This is a prime example of reaching out to others. God bless you and your staff.

I see big problems if the migrant/undocumented workers are eliminated or forced to leave

I sympathize with vegetable farmers. They cannot get the labor they need because of government Red Tape! This Country will be hungry without migrant workers. There are entirely to many people on WELFARE.

I think a legalization plan that is not so expensive needs to be proposed. Legalized immigrants pay taxes. the others don't. would help debt issue

I think immigrates are beneficial to our line of work in landscape & lawn care because of the willingness to work long hours & in extreme weather conditions. We currently do not employ immigrants, although

we have employed only 2 immigrants in the previous 12 years for only a short period of time, with the greatest of the 2 being only 3 months. We benefited from the immigrants workability

I think is an immigrant is here they need to be here legal and speak our language, or leave it.

I think it is insane for the state to impose HB87. We are simply making Georgia less competitive with surrounding states and laws like this show hostility towards a particular ethnic group. Even those recruited through H2A which would be guaranteed legal, will not come to a hostile state for fear of harassment. I also have yet to find a law enforcement office that would even know where to receive training to prevent racial profiling. The law is misguided at best.

I think many of our financial problems on this country as a whole stem from the burden of illegal immigrants. I resent that my tax dollars educate their children and cover their medical expenses when I sometimes find it difficult to meet the needs of my own family. Our local economy is very much ag-based and produce production in especially time-sensitive. Migrant labor remains a vital part of our workforce, forever, something must be done at both state and federal levels to ease the economic strain. I favor tough immigration reform. Metaphorically repeating. I simply do not see a favorable outcome for any if we continue to allow more people aboard an already overloaded ship we're sinking. I think our elected officials in Atlanta were very short sighted in New law. They should have weighed the gain against the loss. It was a tremendous loss for farmers. Just plain dumb on their part. I only have a couple of jobs here that could be affected, but losing those two would be tough

I think that our government needs a practical, affordable guest worker program so that people seeking employment can legally attain. I am not far issuing citizenship to babies of guest workers however. Nor am I for the entitlements currently issued to lazy unemployable citizens, and illegals. i.e: Free health care, welfare.

I think the simplest answer to immigration reform is to provide illegal aliens with worker ID cards, including a number that works like a SSN only to be used to withhold income tax, SS & Medicare from wages. Many immigrants are good productive workers and they could make a useful contribution to our society by paying taxes on their wages.

I think we are mainly Hispanic people to provide the labor for farm and source work. Also, The Hispanics should have a visa or document to work our county.

I think we do have a problem. We some type of legal that is easy to obtain to the US for labor and maybe that is continued as long as they pay taxes and take no drugs or break the law.

I understand that a country or state must know who and how many people are living in its borders, it is not wise to be ignorant of what you are trying to govern. I believe that our state has reacted to political pressure and ideas in a foolish, knee-jerk way. Whether a man is in Georgia illegally or not should not have a bearing on the basis of manner in which he shall be treated. To blindly "scoop up" and deport people is blatant disrespect for our fellow man. This may go far in certain political circles, namely Republican-(Which I am a stanch supporter of that party, but not on this issue) but it does not make it right in GOD's eyes. We cannot treat these people in this way, and I think the same way about that whether they benefit me or not. There must be a feasible solution to this dilemma that we find ourselves in, and the current bill and the Governor's solutions are by no means sane, wise, or righteous. The vast majority of illegals are decent, hardworking people who are doing work that our citizen

population is not willing to do, and if they do, it is much less efficient than the immigrant workers. These immigrants take their chances on the illegal side for the same reasons I do-because the legal way is ridiculously cumbersome, inefficient and wasteful. They would be legal if it was made to more sensible, I believe a system can be derived to allow these workers to be registered, taxed, and treated in a humane manner. Amnesty is not the idea, but truthfulness can be obtained from these people if a fair, decent offer is made from the state instead of instilling a spirit of fear into them. Georgia as a whole will suffer economically, among other ways, if she decides to govern the illegal immigrant population in the manner set forth in HB87. I am a paying supporter of Gov. Deal and Commissioner Black, but I am ashamed of the tactics put forth on this issue. I speak this in deep concern, respect and humility. Thank you, Bush A. Paulk

I understand the push for immigration reform but I also understand that stance against it. In my personal opinion a lot of our "legal workers are unfit for labor positions. this is not because of a lack of skill or ability, but because of a sense of entitlement. The "illegal" workforce wants to be working and is proud of their jobs and hard work. This I sgoing to be hard to replace. I only hire legal employee's but I can see where problems could arise when there are many more people involved in an operation.

I was forced to give my customer base to another company and begin working for them due to the immigration law. Even as a combined group, our business is suffering due to lack of qualified laborers.

I would hope that the rest of the nation would follow suit with the state of Georgia so that all employers were on the same playing field with regard to hiring a legal work force.

I would like to have the opportunity to extend, legally, expired work permits on good employees who are well trained and hard workers

I would like to see locals obtain a work pass so they can continue to work on the farm. I would like to see a better contract program so if I need additional workers we can obtain them also. We (growers) should not be responsible for everything.

I would like to see some type of temporary work visas for qualified people. If there are criminal records involved then they do not receive them.

I would like to see the government come up with a plan for law abiding illegal immigrants to obtain a green card/work visa that would allow them to be here legally, paying taxes and contributing to our country. If they break laws or violate immigration rules they will be deported.

If an adequate supply of Ag. workers can't be formed, Agriculture in GA & the U.S. will suffer. Ga. agencies need to realize that there is NOT enough "domestic" labor. Without H2B & H2A workers, our business would fail

If everyone hired legal workers, then we would all be on a level playing field when it comes to the cost of labor. It is hard to compete with companies using cheap/illegal labor, not paying worker's comp, or employer taxes. I want to run a successful business using legal workers, but I also want to stay in business. I relied on the state of GA to enforce immigration laws and keep illegal workers out of the landscaping business.

If existing laws were enforced there would be less of a need for reform

If GA does not change the immigration law GA agriculture will be avat

If Georgia continues to pursue it's exressior immigration law it will surely limit the ability to hire agriculturally skilled labor, because the face is local labor is not motivated nor skilled enough to perform the muded tasks

If it was not for spanish people there would not be any fresh fruit or vegetable producers in the US. Parolee or prisoners will not pike and make 7.50 per hour. Mabe the price per box will go up with no labor food cost willl be higher.

IF MIGRANT LABOR IS NOT MADE AFFORDABLE AND EASILY OBTAINED IT WILL KILL THE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY BUSINESS IN THE SOUTHERN STATES. WE MUST PROTECT IT AS WELL AS WE CAN, IF LAWS MAKE IT SO HARD TO GET LABOR BUSINESSES LIKE MINW WILL FAIL. COUNTIES LIKE MARION COUNTY HAVE VERY LITTLE INDUSTRY AND HIGH POVERTY RATES IF WE LOSE MIGRANT LABOR WE WILL SHUTDOWN - SAW MILLS - POULTRY PLANTS - LANDSCAPING BUSINESSES. POLITICIANS IN ATLANTA AND WASHINGTON SONT UNDERSTAND THAT ONLY A SMALL AMOUNT OF US CITIZENS WILL EVER SO THESE JOBS EFFICIENTLY. I AM FOR PROTECTING JOBS AND FAMILY BUSINESS. I AM A CHRISTIAN ACONSERVATIVE I BELIEVE WE CAN HAVE A LEGAL WORKFORCE IF WE DO IT IN A MANNER THAT WORKS FOR BOTHSIDES.

If minimum wage is sufficient for local workers why isn't it sufficient for migrant workers? There is no incentive for locals to work. they can;t see the relevance since they have free food, housing and medical care and in most instances transportation is also provides. I believe all migrant workers should be registered tracked and made to pay into our system, taxes, SSN, etc. But I also belief local living off government subsidies be required to pay into to our system. Local workers add additional cost to your operation due to lack of productivity & work ethics. An employee trying to remove a worker due to ethics, intoxication, or drug influence is very hard and to deny unemployment benefit to one of this workers once he has been let go is a joke. Legal migrant workers are very hard workers, dependable and actual appreciate and enjoy having a job. They are a pleasure to be around. they will work long hard hours without complaining, threatening to quit or just not show up the next day. there are no easy answers. Locals will & do not wish to work & around our government caused this problem trying to but notes with subsidies and handouts. The burden of correcting this immigration problem should not have fallen on the legal migrant workers nor the employees trying to scope out a living using migrant workers. I hop some of these comments are helpful. if I can be of any further assistance please call.

If minimum wage is sufficient for local workers, why isn't it sufficient for migrant workers?

If something should happen to where I would not be able to employ my staff or one identical to it I would back off on the amount of work load that we currently do. It's not worth it to employ someone and pay them the same when you get half completed in comparison to my existing staff. I feel like our state just like our country is being led by the blind and ignorant and our Gov leaders are trying everything possible to see our small business/Farmers fail! There needs to be things created that would promote our small business/Farmers!! I would also like to thank everybody involved in promoting this questionnaire and trying to work for our small business/Farmers!!

If the illegals were legalized they would not harvest fruits & Veg. They would try to get Permanent jobs. Therefore creating more unemployment for Georgia. I believe they should be given a farm worker Visa and a tracking collar

If the Mexicans cannot work here then we will have major problems with getting all crops in & on time. They are not taking jobs away from Americans-Americans do not want the jobs in fields etc. It is a shame that our Governor has chased away our good labor workforce to Indiana & surrounding states. We made more money with them here & in turn it improves our economy with everyone spending.

If we have no immigrant labor in the construction industry who is going to do the manual labor, landscaping, masons, framers, roofers, or anyone who has a labor based construction service. This state will never roll like it did in the early 2000's. Lost revenue to do this state and small business owners

If we implemented a sales tax on food again illegals would be paying. Have them register in a database then let them work an honest job.

If you would let the farmer have one of the Mexicans, he already knows to get his friends in Mexico and sign up 50 or so at the Mexican labor office. Then let that office contact the local GA office nearest to the farm that is requesting the help, by providing the names, addresses, birth date, home address of each Mexicans, then let GA labor office provide 90 day work visa and let the Mexicans be responsible for getting to & renting housing by the farmer helping them. Similar to H2 but not so much requirement on the farmer. Please help the little farmer, the big farmer. Cotton,peanut, and dairy have plenty of support, but the blueberry farmer do not have no help for wells or crop support

Illegal Aliens should be subjected to the utmost letter of the law. I feel that illegal immigration is the no. 1 problem in our country.

Illegal already here should be amnestied in and protective border barriers w/shot on site measures put in to protect our borders.

Illegal immigration is just a part of the problem. Congress needs to be replaced with people who are willing to do for this nation, not just suck everything out of it just to maintain their place. Pride in our nation is no longer in existence by most of its people. All they want is what the government can give them. And our leaders do so just to stay in office. When people have to go back to work to support their families, immigration reform will take care of itself.

Illegal is ILLEGAL!!

Illegal workers are not needed in this country. They take Americans jobs, pay no taxes, and send all money back to their country. Get welfare & food stamps, free medical care. Commit crimes and then flee back to Mexico to avoid the law. SEND THEM ALL HOME!!!

I'm for "legal" immigration. But it has to be a faster system, many who come here to work, do so because their family is hungry, they CAN'T wait 6-7 years for the process. Secure the borders, and put a simple system in place. Farm this out to the credit card companies, they know how to track things. They know who you are, where you are, how much you are spending or paying for what etc. The green card

should be like a credit card, with direct deposit, and automatic tax withdrawals etc., Keep it simple, less chances of fraud.

Immigrates will do what you tell them. Most of the legal work force will not

Immigration laws must be changed to allow legal work VISAs. Current laws create a 'prohibition-type' environment, which forces migrant workers to go underground to secure green cards. If existing immigration laws are not reformed to allow for migrant workers, we are going to be forced to use non-legal workers to get food on America's table American natinoal simply will not perform farm work.

Immigration laws should be enforced at all levels. However, there should also be easier ways to get and keep the workers needed to do the jobs the citizens want done. Waiting lists for permant work visas of 5 years or over for workers coming to this country on temporary work visas for over 12 years with no criminal records is embarrassing. There has to be an inexpensive bureaucratic-free way made to get the labor we need to run or business. If we had these in place, maybe it wouldn't be such a big deal.

Immigration laws should be upheld-Local help would be easier to hire if there weren't so many assistance programs for those who do not desire to work.

Immigration reform does not directly affect my operation.

Immigration reform in Georgia is a must! There are too many innocent, hardworking loyal hispanics who came here as small children who can't get a driver's license or social security numbers because of wrong headed Georgia laws. They are kept from contributing.

Immigration reform is a federal issue that shouldn't be handled at the state level. Employers can only go by the information the potential employee provides. We aren't document experts.

Immigration reform is a must, but you have to fill the jobs with someone else. The only way that will happen is to get rid of welfare and those that are getting money for nothing will have to fill the jobs of the illegals.

Immigration reform is a topic that results from a need for a productive workforce. This is not just in agri-business either. The construction industry among others, is full of illegals who drive the price of work down because they don't play by the rules. The lack of productivity in our citizens has created this demand for migrant workers. Until people stop getting paid with tax dollars to NOT work, nothing will change.

immigration reform is all about money! If someone has an invalid SS number we should change withholding to zero dependents. This would maximize state and federal withholdings. Our ginning season is so short we cannot justify H2A work force.

Immigration reform should not be implemented within a 1 year of being passed. Growers need to have adequate time to prepare for the change, Either through adopting new labor recruiting strategies, or by growing less labor intensive crops. Sadly, the later is probably what will happen. Georgia will lose high labor crops, this is especially bad for the state because high labor crops are generally high value crops for the state.

Immigration reform was welcomed by me. Too many growers and processors prefer illegals because it makes their operations cheaper, increasing their profits. When the blueberry industry began in south Georgia the pickers and workers at processing sheds were students and teachers. Since the illegals came they have displaced the teenage students who now are largely unemployed this season.

In my opinion what should be done is let every immigrant that has not been in any trouble with the law (except traffic tickets) register in the country that they live to be given a green card so they can legally work. Then give them a period of 12 to 24 months that they have to get their citizenship. They should be able to renew their green card once to give them an additional time to get this done if needed with the work load this would put on that office. They should learn to read road signs and other English to be able to do these things to be legal and work without fear of being sent to their homeland.

In the past years we have had great difficulty obtaining good qualified domestic workers for our tobacco operation. In 2007 we started using the Federal H-2A Program and the workers that we have received the past four years have been outstanding. We are very satisfied with their job performance and their attitude overall is very good. The problem we have is when we file an application for the H-2A program with the GA Dept. of Labor they post our job order in the state employment offices and if someone comes in and wants to apply for our job order they tell us we are required to hire citizens to have a chance at the job first but as I stated earlier we have already experienced this and the fact is there is not any local people out there that will last any length of time much less the whole season doing this type of work. Tobacco is a crop that needs to be harvested and worked timely and in order to do this we need a stable and willing work force to accomplish our goal of delivering good quality tobacco to the market place. Our H-2A workers have done this. Also, tobacco is different from many other crops in that when we begin harvesting it is more of a team effort and you must have a precise number of people there every day in order to make the operation work, whereas with harvesting vegetables or blueberries each worker more or less just does his job and it doesn't have an adverse effect on the overall operation if he doesn't perform well or not. In a situation like with vegetables or blueberries if a farmer had to hire a person to pick vegetables or berries and that person was not performing well then the farmer could simply let him go without interrupting his whole operation but with tobacco it takes the whole team working together to get the job done. In our situation it takes 8 hired workers to satisfy our needs. We feel like the H-2A program is best for us but we would like to see changes in the way they require us to consider domestic workers. For example: As American citizens ourselves, we feel we should have the right to hire or not hire a person based on our belief of whether or not we think they could or could not perform the job duties. Instead, the way it is now we are required to hire them regardless, just because they applied for the job. If we felt like we could hire a good qualified domestic workforce that would harvest and process our tobacco crop in a timely manner we would be happy to do that but it is just plain and simple, that will not happen. Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns in this matter.

IN THE WHOLESALE NURSERY BUSINESS WE NEED HONEST, DEPENDABLE WORKERS WHO ARE WILLING TO DO WHAT WE ASK WITHOUT A BUNCH OF GRUMBLING. MOST OF THE AMERICAN WORKERS IN THE LABOR JOBS COMPLAIN CONTINUALLY ABOUT THE CONDITIONS AND THEIR NOT GETTING PAID ENOUGH TO WORK THAT HARD ETC. AS A BUSINESS OWNER & OPERATOR I AM LIMITED IN WHAT I CAN PAY BASED ON SALES AND PROFITS. I'M FOR DEPORTING AND PREVENTING THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT FROM ENTERING THE US, PREVENTING MANY SOCIAL SERVICES (TAX PAYER PAID SERVICES) FROM ILLIGAL ALIENS BUT I'M WILLING TO LET PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK AND BETTER THEMSELVES HAVE A CHANCE.

Include dairy in the H2A Program

Instead of focusing on deporting illegals figure out a way to make the illegals legal so they can do the work no one else will do anymore.

Issue work visa

It does not really affect our business. it seems to be more of a political issue than a true farming/agricultural one. The effect that it seems to be having on farming is detrimental. Immigration reform needs to be a federal issue. This state needs to be seasonal ag. workers.

It effects my operation greatly. We service turf, golf course, and vegetable industry. If our customers are unable to secure labor to grow and harvest their crops then we will not be supplying fumigants and fumigant supplies to them. They are out of business and we are out of business.

It has had no effect on my business

It has stopped new employees from coming to work.

It is becoming more difficult to find local residents to perform the types of work that our operation requires.

It is my opinion that this survey and all the man hours and paper, and cost of mailing is a waste. Illegal migration should be halted completely. There is no excuse for the turning of heads and lack of enforcement of migration laws. I have to follow laws and pay taxes, so should everyone. If everyone does not operate legally, we should all be excused from the law to do what we must. I understand this is the greatest country on Earth and everyone desires to be here, I fault no one for this desire. I do however find fault with federal, state, and local government for allowing this to become so out of hand. Thank you for your consideration

It is sad that Americans are above doing this type of work in the fields harvesting fruits & vegetables. We need a seasonal, experience (hispanic) workforce that is conditioned to do this type of hard work. My crews come in from FL. Work spring cantaloupes finish in 8 weeks and go back home. If you give these people a work permit to come work at Docta Farms from May 25 to July 25 make them pay taxes under there work permit # and return home you dont have to legalize them or give them benefits but let them work to fill gaps where others will not work and let's keep our produce industry strong or we will go out of business. We are going to see produce farms deteriorating if we dont do something quickly.

it seems that immigrants want to work and our local work force has learned that they can drain unemployment payments, that in some cases are more than their salary or waged would be, they dont want to work-Immigrants are they only answer-I would prefer them to be legal and will try to hire only legal immigrants if necessary.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR PASSING THE LEGISLATION ARE UNAWARE OF THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION REGARDING THE LABOR FORCE. WHEN FARMERS IN GEORGIA SUFFER, FOOS

PRICES SPIKE ANF LABOR POSTIONS GO UNFILLED SUE TO LACK OF WILLINGNESS BY CITIZENS, WE WILL ALL FEEL THE PAIN OF THEIR VOTES.

It should have been taken care of a long time ago----Border controls---make it mandatory to come into and stay in this country legally -period

It will kill our farms - we CANNOT operate with all legal workers - we do have 6 permanent workers with 14 dependents that will all lose their jobs if the new law runs off the illegals. This is crazy - Mr. Deal needs to take his connics - meth users & makers - child rapist & the like and employ them in the state capital as janitors & such - we ahve 7 grandkids out here and we don't need his help. Politics has no place out here - the absolutely dont have GD Clue as to what is happening - please let Mr. Black read this - maybe between his dinners with contributors lawyers & such - This new law will destroy agriculture in Ga. But I'm sure it will get a lot of votes from people who think their food comes from grocery stores - We as citizens & farmers would be glad to just give you a government salary if you would just promise to go home or where ever and stop doing anything - because all you do is screw up

It would be a great day if America still had a work force willing to do agricultural jobs, but do to entitlements it is no longer that way. When people would rather "sit at home because I can make as much at home doing nothing," the ones of us who depend on hand labor do not have a chance if we cannot recruit laborers form other nations who will work. The reformation needs to be among the people sitting at home drawing entitlement checks every month not among the people pulling our hair out trying to plan for the future because we do not know if we will have a workforce or not.

It's a joke. It ignores what is actually happening with hourly labor in the developed world. Finding legal qualified workers is the primary obstacle to growth in my industry. There are over 500 tree service companies in the Atlanta metro area impacted adversely by this initiative.

It's a joke. There are many things that could be implemented that would address issues of taxation and documentation, but Tea Party idiots are extremely narrow minded and focused only upon doing what will get themselves re-elected. Our economy has always had affordable labor but people who lack the courage to be entrepreneurial are clueless about the cost of doing business.

ITS A TERRIBLE LAW. MY BEST WORKERS SIMPLE LEFT STATE. GEORGIA CANNOT BE AN ISLAND

It's not a reform, just a shift of burden from government to modesty.

Just about every landscape company has illegal workers. Removing all of them would put Georgia into a state of poverty that it has never seen. They are working in just about every industry. Something needs to be done. In my opinion forcing them out is just going to make the problem worse. The people who are trying to force this do not realize the consequences and once its done it will be too late. Alot if people assume it will not affect them but it's going to affect everybody. Alot of the people on unemployment are on it because they don't want to work. Having more available jobs will not change that. If you force them to work they will not care about their job or give 100%, which means business will have to change more because of the work ethic of their employees. This means higher prices for everybody. This will force the small business out of business and the unemployment rate will increase not decrease.

Let more legal workers into the. Do no limit H2A workers

Let's make those people that have been workers here and been productive citizens ---> Legal. Speed the process up for citizenship if they are eligible ie speak English, have been law abiding. Don't grant them citizenship if they're not willing. just because their children are born here is no reason for them to become citizens. Common sense.

Like I have previously stated, the people I've been using for years (seasonal) to harvest my melons say they are legal. They are hard workers, good people and do jobs no one else wants to do. I had to use some local people this season because of the labor shortage, if all my help (workers) worked like these people (local), I probably would have lost 1/3 to 1/2 of my crop. I really don't know what the answer to the labor problem is but I do know if the state of Georgia goes forth with the labor bill as I understand it, the one part of GA's economy that's finally beginning to look good would be hurt badly. Some Ideas I heard are the following: allow the illegals to pay a determined amount of money and allow them to work for five years, paying taxes like everyone else and then after five years if they don't get in any legal problem problems with the law, they start their legal process. (citizenship)

Local labor lacks adequate work ethic, we have absenteeism and tardiness problems and must terminate 3 for every 1 that makes it, leading to great stress on our operation. Other, more qualified work force either finds these entry level positions demeaning or below them. or would rather pull unemployment benefits than actually put in a hard day's work.
Local labor will not do manual labor. They are spoiled and lazy.

Local people don't want a job or work they want a check!

Look for consumer prices to go up if no labor available to harvest crops. Not good for this economy.

Make it easier for migrant workers to get Visa's to work!

Make it easier for us to get legal workers when I can't get Americans who are willing to fill the positions that I have. If you want to "tax" the illegals, put a 27% state tax on wire money transfers to other countries when you don't have a legal state or federal ID. I'm sure you'll be able to use the money for something productive. Oh, and most importantly, make it simple.

make sure they are legal

Make the process more reasonable to work through - so that immigrants are more prone to become legal workers. Let the businesses do what they need to do to be successful & grow so more jobs are available to others in the US & here in GA.

Most illegal aliens are here to work and do better for themselves and family. They should not be allowed to receive any government sponsored help, scncerling, health care, etc. Maybe thru an employer//citizen sponsor, an easier way to get green card, etc may be possible

Most immigrates do not want to be illegal. However they are scared of our government. Immigration reform as is incriminates both workers and producers. Anyone who wants to work in Georgia should be allowed to. If we would just detain immigrants and immigrants and give then work visa's it would be a great savings to taxpayers and harvesting could be completed. Making criminals out of working people is

not reform. The migGeorgia live in needs the immigrants. Harvest time is important to all Georgians
Please help us

Most of the workers we need are under the age of 30. Many in this group were brought to Georgia as small children and were educated in our schools. They may not have had an opportunity to get proper documents but we should not hold this group accountable for their parents bringing them here.

My concerns at immigration reform hardly compare to the larger Ag producers in GA as I am a one woman band and won't suffer as the big guys do with lack of employees. However I have a major concern @ illegal infringing on my tax dollars, infrastructure, & burdens on the country.

My experience with our hispanic work force has been very positive. We have owned the company for 14 years and have never hired a day laborer. Everyone we employ is on payroll, with all taxes, etc. withheld, and for the last 3 years we have e-verified. Landscape installation, more so than maintenance, is very physically demanding and requires skill, regardless of the task, (I never knew a man who is good with a shovel, was worth his weight in gold), and a job that very few people want. The Hispanic worker does not want to be here illegally, even if he is legal, often his family is in Mexico...he sends them money every week....enduring long periods away from home. My experience with H2B was long, expensive and arduous....give us a program that allows us to hire workers legally, sponsor them and take away the punitive actions that help no one. Somehow we have forgotten that we are a nation of immigrants, our nation has been built on the back of immigrants, without immigrants where is the labor force of the future to come from....certainly, not from the dwindling white population, nor the children of families who have been on social welfare for decades.

My farming operation doesn't require a lot of migratory workers. I think immigration is a federal problem and should be handled by the Feds. States alone can't enforce immigration laws they put on the books. Illegals would bypass states that have state laws and go to states that don't, therefore you don't have an adequate labor force for the people who need them. I realize something needs doing because they are putting a burden on tax payers. I don't think house bill 87 is the answer! Vinson Grippin

My greatest concern is that state level immigration enforcement will significantly diminish the workforce required to sustain the agricultural industry.

N/A to my operation. However, I am very concerned for those people who depend on migrant workers to grow and harvest their crop. I am in an area that grows very little fruits and vegetables, but we have soil in the Vidalia onion qualified area. If we expand into that market, it will directly affect my business.

NEED A GUEST WORKER PROGRAM THAT WOULD WORK. H2A IS NOT THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM. TOO EXPENSIVE AND HAS TOO MUCH DETAILS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN IRONED OUT.

Need a reasonable system for finding qualified workers.

Need good dependable qualified farm labor to work at fair wage and not have to be paid housing transportation etc.

NEED GUEST WORKER PROGRAM BUT CHILDREN BORN TO GUEST WORKERS DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY BECOME US CITIZENS

Need work force without having to go through H2A because we only need labor for 6 weeks. H2A is too expensive for only 6 weeks work.

No comments only we need to be very careful about our laws as to workers so not to cause economic distress & loss of income & industries moving out of state.

No illegals

No illegals, get them out

Not just Georgia but America needs to execute illegal aliens, and needs to quit giving handouts (welfare, food stamps, etc.) to an able work force. If they want money and food they need to work for it.

Not only Georgia but the whole U.S. needs immigration reform. However, agriculture must have a means of securing field workers. Relying on American workers to work in the field is a JOKE!! Any competent person who says otherwise is simply mis informed. Farm work is not easy work. Farmers cannot afford to pay much over minimum wages for farm workers if they expect to make a profit. If Americans are going to eat fresh produce, the U.S. will either have to import labor or fresh produce. Not thought was given to immediate effect new laws would have, prices will have to increase because labor costs have to increase. Federal programs are too time consuming and costly.
nothing to add

Only way to get workers in our area is to stop welfare payouts. Male worker are living off their girlfriends welfare checks from number of children they have by them or others. Far too much welfare available to those who could/should work

Our area has less & less workers available each year and harder to find legal workers

our crops are labor driven for harvesting and getting to market. Without cost effective labor. no profit, no harvest, no farming!!

Our son's farm also had very bad experience with DoL workers. Their performance was terrible. Crops were destroyed by their lack of attention in what they were doing. Stepping on squash, cutting cabbage improperly, they would cut melons not yet ripe, they would drop & damage melons (at our farm) and just because they wanted to get out of the field. Performance is terrible because DoL workers ethic is terrible. We can't afford to waste time & money on people who truly have no interest in working hard! Regarding use of prisoner workforce – cutting cabbage & melons requires use of a knife! Is it safe to permit them to use these tools? What is our liability if they misuse these tools? They haven't been trained, and even if DoL does this, we fear their "ethics" are questionable and can't take that risk. At another local farm, DoL workers which included some on parole, performed poorly – and demanded & threatened to be paid for work – law enforcement was called out to mitigate the damage & rectify the situation. We do not want to experience that trouble! In our 15 years' experience, the best workers – who show up on time – never complain – work extremely hard & perform great and all of that results in quality produce being delivered are the Hispanic immigrants. They truly do the work that DoL workers, unemployed US citizens have no interest in doing! Politicians have no idea how hard this work is and we need people with work ethic if we want quality produce to feed this nation! The Labor Dept & US policies have perpetuated the problem and this issue is very serious if we want to continue to feed this

nation we have got to recognize that Mexican labor is Not taking jobs from U.S unemployed. They are the ONLY ones who are willing to do this exhausting, back breaking work! Politicians need to implement a policy on the U.S. unemployed whereby if they want to collect a check from the government, they must do a GOOD JOB – not a poor one. At the end of every day – the employer could evaluate their performance & if that worker performed poorly –over & over again – why should they get government assistance at all? That is REWARDING BAD BEHAVIOR! We have witnessed personally & at local farms seen the comparisons where DOL (unemployed) take twice as long and perform half as well as Mexican immigrants. This is not sustainable. Immigrant workforce is critical to this farm industry. Unlike other industries which have time & luxury to train people – produce is different. There is no time to waste. In 4-7 days – the market changes drastically – produce is growing or rotting and the result is LOST FOOD & INCOME. Immigration reform & Labor policy is directly correlated and until labor policy stop, REWARDING lazy & unwilling DoL unemployed U.S. citizens by giving them checks for not working- or performing terribly when they have work – we will never address this problem. I can't stress enough - as a farmer with 1,000 acres in South Georgia – we MUST have immigrants do this work if we want to continue to provide food for our nation's people. This is not an option & I sincerely hope a policy will recognize immigrants CONTRIBUTIONS to this great country – hard work & sales taxes paid while they are here – they are not a BURDEN and should not be treated as such. They are willing to do work lazy Americans refuse to do. Shame on policy makers for not recognizing that.

our system for illegal immigrants to become legal has been broken for years and now the government is asking small businesses to pay for it. In this time of tough economics that is not what we need!!

Paying people not to work

People from the US will not work like the immigrant workers because of the hand out from the welfare system. and they are doing the same things to the immigrant people. to many handouts.

Please give us the means to hire workers legally that will perform the jobs we have to do.

Please help! My dairy milks 2,000 cows , 3 times a day, every day of every year. I own 250 dry cows, 1,700 heifers, and grow 1,200 acres of rye grass, 1,100 acres of corn silage, and 700 acres of sorghum silage. Gross revenue generated is approximately \$10 million per year. I have a total investment in the dairy/land/cattle of about \$16 million. Most of my milk is sold in Florida, so I create positive gross revenues for the state of Georgia. Most of my milk check is spent locally purchasing feed/fuel/repairs/etc. I would love to expand my dairy, but now that is not an option due to lack of hispanic workers, I was forced to reduce milking from 3 times a day to 2 - reducing gross income 15%. I have tried working locals, investing significant time and effort, but that just won't work. Working prisoners/probationers is a joke - end of story. We need a year round/legal hispanic workforce in Georgia. the system needs to monitor their location, tax their wages, and let them renew paperwork locally. The system should create a pathway to citizenship. Please help. A lot of local businesses depend on me spending money in town, and without a way to get the cows milked/fed/ cared for, my days in the dairy business are numbered

PRESENTLY USE NO IMMIGRANT LABOR, BUT WOULD IN THE FUTURE IF LEGAL MEANS WAS AVAILABLE.

Quite frankly, I seldom find bureaucrats or politicians with the business background or real world experience to understand the consequences of their kneejerk reaction policies.. Put a band-aid on a gunshot wound. Try working 60+ hours a week trying to meet payroll while hamstrung with regulations and laws that create problems rather than solving them. Sit with me while I interview the tattooed, drugged up highschool dropouts that form the labor pool for hourly workers. try to fill out your crews with Americans that don't get up in the morning, or have to be off to see their parole officer. I'll tell you what immigration reform will do - crops will not be picked, restaurants will not be staffed & I'll sell out

rather than work this hard fighting a losing battle. I also feel like I just wasted 15 minutes of my busy day.

Really only use hispanics to pull glyphosate resistant pigweeds, and occasional manual labor jobs. I only use the ones who stay here year round. They make my life easier for two or three weeks. However, we would get it done without them.

Reform would be a good thing for my business there are several companies in my area using illegal workforce. They hire 1 legal worker and then send 3 illegal workers as the crew.

Send them all home and put own our people to work. The President and everybody at the White House could cut there own pay and that alone would knock out half of the deficit.

Should be some way to get undocumented guest workers to a legal status. These people are here to work not draw a check from the government

Since no one but immigrants are willing to do the hard, Nasty Work we will continue to need them. This will, of course , exacerbate the social issues. Simply put, we cannot farm in Georgia without willing workers unless we go all mechanical. That's not feasible for most crops, so the turtles can pull their heads back in their shells and scream about immigrant labor, having no idea how it affects their lives. Since the immigration movement into the Ag. Industries we have become dependent on these works. For most n the industry we cannot find others (Nonimmigrants) to do the jobs. (There's a lot to be said about that)

So not use immigrant workers because of legal issues; most are reliable for short amounts of time; try to keep our business small enough to need only US citizens - though qualified workers are hard to find and the cost of doing business is greater.

Sometimes it is nice to pick up labor that you can't usually fine other people to do.

Stop hiring illegals and they will stop coming.

Thank you for this survey. I am very small but I hope you obtain results to help our state.

Thank you, MR. Black for trying to solve this serious problem. So many industries depend on a hardworking, dependable, sober and honest work force. We need to stream line and increase our work visa programs. We need to address the people already working in the US. May have been working for years, their children were born here, they have bought houses, started businesses and stayed out of trouble. House bill 87 is not the solution! We need common sense reform that provides the work force that agriculture and business needs without making that work force and employers criminals. Most illegal workers and the farmers/business people are honest, hardworking and are just trying to support our families. Together lets solve this problem!

Thank you.

The ability for Georgia to perform at expected quality and current cost is been highly compromised. Raise the cost of living changing large corporations to come here. Our ability as a state to compete for national or international contracts.

The agriculture and nursery industry needs migrant workers to survive. Americans simply will not do the manual labor or stick to the job. Reform is needed quickly.

The American people don't have any. I fear what it is going to do to the economy of this state.

The current immigration laws are killing the landscape industry and will soon result in a huge loss of tax revenue because of businesses failing.

The current legislation that Governor Deal signed is bad for Georgia's economy.

The current pending law is ridiculous. All of my workers pay all taxes but cannot receive anything for their contribution. They only want to work to provide for their families. They have the work ethics that Americans used to have. They are treated as second class citizens without recognition for their contributions to our society. If you eliminate this work force, there is not another work force to replace them to do manual labor. The infrastructure of labor jobs that are highly responsible for the economic drive of our economy will be devastated and inflation will subsequently rise especially as products and services decrease in cost to produce. Our economy is already suffering. SOLUTION- Charge immigrant workers and employers an impact fee of maybe \$2000 each party. Make the employer responsible for paying all taxes for the employee. Make the employer accountable if the employee gets in trouble. After a period of time, allow them the ability to be sponsored by the employer and give them the ability to apply for legal immigration status. It's simpler than you think!!

The employer is the only one penalized. Illegal workers can buy autos, houses, groceries, rent, pay utilities and all other services and the providers are not penalized.

The e-verify system will put the Georgia farmer out of business unless he turns to the H2A program. Your average American citizen will not perform the type of work we need. It is too hard for them and they are not able to meet production.

The Federal H2A program needs changes made to it to make it easier for farmers to use.

The green industry needs workers and this law has had adverse effects. Tell me one probationer who's going to do this type of work.

The hispanic culture wants to work. They want to provide for their families. They "Do" have a lot to bring to the table. They also need to pay their fair share of local & state infrastructure expenses. Treat them like their other visiting workers with visas. Require health insurance. We do not need to supply indigent care/ food stamps etc. require and avail a drivers license-perhaps a different classification.

The Hispanic workers we employee are dependable. The non-hispanics workers we have employed in the past are not dependable.

The immigrants will be harvesting our food whether its grown here, where we have quality control or in Mexico where there is none.

The immigration law has put a hurt on the vegetable industry due to lack of workers available

The job of harvesting blueberries is not an unskilled job. Each berry must be handled in a way as to not damage the fruit, but at the same time be able to quickly differentiate between green, ripe, or over ripe fruit. This is a skill that the migrant labor force has developed and acquired over the past years of field labor

The landscaping industry has taken a big hit with the fall of the construction industry. Immigration reform has dealt another blow. Surely there is some way to allow these workers to work legally for at least 9 months of the year. There are no natural American citizens coming to apply for these jobs. The average American teenager does not want to work 10 hours a day in heat, cold and rain.

The law makers in Atlanta have lost their minds. If the government would stop paying people NOT TO WORK (welfare & unemployment) we would not have the problems finding willing labor.

The legal immigration process needs to be enforced. Many Georgians are looking for work and should not have to compete against illegal immigrants. They should have to compete with each other, however, based on skill, work ethic and attitude. We are a nation of laws, and these laws need to be enforced. Taxes & fees need to be reduced so that capitol expansion can take place and allow the free market to function as it is meant to.

The Mexicans will do the hard work Americans will not. We are using a labor temp agency and it is costing an arm and a leg. We pass the cost to the consumer.

The nature of our farm's work is labor intensive, it is not necessarily manual labor intensive. Therefore with the type of farm we have we can operate without any immigrant workers.

The people in power don't seem interested in stopping illegal immigration. Immigration should be slowed down. Our infrastructure will soon be overrun. Housing , medical care, food & water will soon have more than it can stand the Government paying people not to work is the main reason for immigration.

The political posturing is pathetic! Solve the issue!

The problem w/ the reform is that the media exaggerated the bill that was actually passed to the nth degree. Therefore all seasonal workers whether legal or not have & will avoid Georgia! The H-2A program is in most cases useless to most producers, especially in blueberries due to its restrictions & requirements as well as its expense! Short seasons make it very difficult to utilize H-2A! There are many expenses outside of the program itself that are incurred due to administrative responsibilities!

The problems described in question #32 are problems that have been argued for many years. These problems are not going to change. Immigrant labor is willing to perform these tasks. (FYI- I am part of work force and work alongside my employees. I am at the farm 7 days a week & Do Not ask employees to do any task that I am not willing to do.)

The system was broken before the governor's new reforms. Now the system is even worse. There are economic problems that need to be resolved within an economic context, not a political context. The

reforms have done nothing to fix these problems nor could they since those who support the reforms lack a basic understanding of the problems themselves.

The usual problems - Finding a labor force that will get off the porch for something other than checking the mail box for a check

The work visa needs to be easier to get in Mexico. Employers should be able to sponsor a worker with little money involved.

THE WORKERS I HAVE HIRED OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS ARE VERY LOYAL, RELIABLE, DEPENDABLE, TRUSTWORTHY, DEDICATED AND ARE JUST GOOD PEOPLE, WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO "ADOPT" THEM TO GET THEM LEGAL. THEY WOULD MAKE GOOD TAX PAYING CITIZENS, I BELIEVE.

THERE ARE PLENTY OF NON-VIOLENT PRISONERS WHO COULD WORK THE FIELDS TO BRING CROPS IN.

There aren't many American people willing to do hand labor on our farm. Most of our hand labor is done by migrant workers. As long as this country pays people not to work we need our migrant workers to get our crops harvested.

There is a reason Americans started using illegal workers. The reason is obvious and is because its jobs that Americans won't do. Why would they want to go to work when they can sit at home and get a check for doing nothing and free food and medical care to boot. Most if the illegals want to work and will show up for work on time and will get the job done. It sounds like a good idea to send all illegals back to their country and give Americans their jobs back. Americans do not want those jobs back though. If Americans wanted those jobs we would have never started using illegals anyway. It's fine to send all illegals back to their country but we have to quit with all the handouts to Americans so they will want to go back to work and they will want to show up for work on time and they will want to keep their job because they know they will have to buy foods & other to live. I know there is a huge problem with illegals being in this country, yes, I would love to send all the illegals back to their country but it's not going to work unless we quit babying Americans. Stop with the handouts and give those Americans back a job so they will have some self-worth and pride to be an American! Quit letting these Americans be a drag on our country! they get most everything for free and then bitch about how they don't get enough. When will this end? It won't unless we do something about it. It will actually get a lot worse if we don't stop it now. To sum it up 1)stop handouts, 2)send illegals home, 3)put Americans to work. If it doesn't happen this way employers will pay the price!

There is a skill motivated work force in Georgia. They are essential to the efficiency of business in Agriculture, food processing, service, construction industries. Many are illegal. They need a process to pay a fine but stay in place and keep businesses running smoothly.

There needs to be a work program. Charge the employee \$250 for a green card for each worker and have a state insurance policy. Have a worker driver's license program and charge for all of these services. We need workers and do not mind paying for the work force but don't put us out of business and let the other states around us have an advantage.

There needs to be an extraordinarily easy program to allow legal workers into Georgia to be employed in agriculture. It does NOT need to be encumbered with NEEDLESS paperwork. It should allow good law-abiding people to work in our state. There should be an EASY way to collect taxes from them if they receive benefits

They ARE HERE ! Give them a card of some kind. Where is our Social-Security money. My labor will for just the last 3 year's \$708,000 an. some of these people are ILLEGAL We have been taking out the money's for S-S 25 year's : who is going to collect OUR S-s money. for the Illegal's
They cut prices back so far that it's hard to compete with them. They will start up Businesses of their own and don't have proper licensing

They need to be legal or stay in their country. Biggest problem it is too easy for someone to draw unemployment in USA and not checked up on to see if they are really hunting a job. Community service or something I think would be appropriate if you get check from Gov.

THINK IT GOES TO FAR. WE TAKE TAXES OUT ON ALL OUR EMPLOYEES AN PAY FROM 8.50 TO \$15.00 / HR. IF YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN HIRE COMPETENT LABOR TO DO THIS TYPE WORK WITHOUT USING SOME IMMIGRANT WORKERS THEN YOU DONT LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD.

This farming operation in its present condition has been on operation for more than 75 years. We have seen great changes in labor and mechanization. In the 1950's we had a permanent work force of 78 souls. Today we have a permanent work force of three. If we cannot find temporary labor for our perishable crops we must be innovative with our machinery or stop growing those commodities, or quit. Every year we marvel at the number of farmers and farms that give up to urban sprawl. We are getting old and the course-of-least-resistance is more apparent than it ever has been. Were it not for our young- one's, government regulations tell us it's time to move on. There are no new frontiers.

This is easy. Document and screen the illegals. Many have been here for years working hard & paying taxes. Expand the HB2 to get more workers on the jobs that Americans won't perform. If they can come here legally to work then we would not have the costly mess at the border and no employer would hire undocumented illegal workers for cash and no taxes.

This landscape industry needs a legal avenue in which to hire hispanics. We need a way to sponsor workers. It is a myth that these people take jobs from Americans. A total myth. Americans will NOT do this work NO MATTER WHAT THE PAY! Politicals use this LIE to pass reforms! It HURTS employers who boost this economy.

This new immigration reform bill will hurt our business considerable, and it may end up cutting our production by more than 30% due to not having the available work force needed. This will in turn cut our future sales by more than 30% which will make it hard for us to stay in business.

This presents a major problem for our industry. The workforce is dominated by illegal immigrants who have been willing to endure the physical demands of the green industry and be paid well to do so. In the past 12 years, I have yet to see lines of unemployed American knocking on my door for a job. The Americans that I have employed over the years do not touch the level of performance and dedication that the Hispanic community brings to our industry. The illegal workforce has supported our industry and economy for decades and now would be an opportune time to legally bring them into our economy and since they have for so long supported our economy. My workforce are already paying taxes and contributing to society. The reality is that we need them.

This problem does not really pertain to us much - we are a small farm - (only 1 or 2 employees) but I hear neighbors & friends complain about the problem of not being able to find workers when they need them - what I say is your republican politicians made this bed so you might as well lay in it since you voted for them.

Unfortunately, there is nothing which seems to work to legalize illegal workers. Lawyers start processes & then supposedly hit 'brick walls' with a portion who do try to become legal. Some fear it's a trap to be brought onto the government's radar & a quick deportation & none of this should be this difficult. Most of the workers we have come in contact with over the years are the most loyal & hard working, people I have been privileged to know. Government in general has become much more difficult to maneuver through to get answers & action.

UNLESS YOU ARE GOING TO REQUIRE A WELFARE CANADITE TO HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CERTIFICATE, YOU MUST PROVIDE FOR GEORGIA AGRICULTURE TO HAVE PROCESS TO SOMEONE WORKERS. I HAVE WORKED IN THE HEAVY CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS ALL OVER THE WORLD, AND ALBANY, GEORGIA IS THE MOST UNPRODUCTIVE LABOR MARKET I HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED.

We are desperate for qualified workers. We are unable to sustain our business much less grow it. We have tried the Department of Labor and it was a disaster. We had a job fair in Puerto Rico and hired 7 people after interviewing many. This also was a failure. Labor shortage is the number one crisis our industry is facing.

We are unable to grow our business because of lack of workers and new cost of workers. I answered H2A questions as if they were H2B.

We can foresee many difficulties ahead in getting our crops and our growers' crops for 2012 & forward. We were not affected in 2011 as were many producers. However, we did not need as many workers because we lost about 1/2 of our crops due to drought.

We certainly do not have any immigrant labor but certainly consider them if we could verify their status as legal

We could not find enough legal workers for our operation (7 days a week, 12 hour shifts, 10 weeks) We could probably find the number we needed but their work production would be -unsatisfactory. I think you know what I mean

We have a hispanic work force that are already here and training and willing to do the work., The work force income taxes and property taxes just like the rest of the work force in GA but are willing to do the work we need. We need a way to get these workers a work permit so they can work legally and continue to help the numer of industry in our state Agriculture.

We have a work permit for migrant labor. Let them pay taxes while they are here. H2A seems designed to discourage farmers to use. There are too many stipulations. Farmers shouldn't be forced to provide transportation and housing.

We have always had help to gather crops until the immigration reform began. Migrant workers have been paid faily & earned their money. Illegal migrant workers work in lage corp. - Hopefully they are

being harassed just like farmers. If something does not change - farmers will not be able to afford to farm due to crop loss. Let them work - pay taxes - & not draw welfare -

We have a very good workforce that includes Hispanics who are hard-working and very family oriented. Many have been with us for years, the longest being 13 years. No American employees have stayed that long. We need a "guest worker program" to supply workers to the agriculture industry. The workers or employees would have to pay a fee to work in the U.S. This fee would be renewable and would not be a path to citizenship. The worker would be legal and able to obtain a driver's license, insurance and car tags. The dairy industry needs year round workers because of the extensive training involved and the technical nature of work required. After the dairymen invest the time and money required to train these workers, they need to be able to stay longer than a year at the time. Successful dairies need a stable, long term work force to be profitable and competitive in today's economic climate. This is not possible when they are forced to train a new work force annually

We have concerns about the "e-verify" requirements and the effects this will have.

We have got to have a solution! Local people are not going to do this work. we are going to go to mechanical harvesting. Therefore we will not be hiring as many employees in the future. Therefore payroll taxes will not be as much for the economy of GA. Migrant labor is very needed. They contribute to our society and the economy by buying gas, food, supplies. I do not understand why we do not allow them to have a work visa that allows them to have a type of driver license and insurance while they are here. they are hardworking family oriented people.

We have had a trained workforce available to travel from state to state providing workers that we needed. What we need NOW is a way to provide them a legal work permit to avoid majority of food product from being produced out of country and to provide jobs and stability for farm economics.

We have too many people in the U.S. that have become "lazy because of Gov. programs. There many jobs available especially in agriculture but no-one (Americans) wants them! If americans would do these jobs we won't have the immigration problem. There would be no jobs for the immigrants to come for! Some people say they are taking americans jobs. I ask who's job have they taken? If the workers could be legalized and pay their fair share of taxes the defect could be reduced.

We have trained our help and don't need to train new ones. Untrained help is a major safety problem.

We have tried hiring blacks & Whites -Mexicans work circles around them. They have to work hard to survive -Others rely on government to support them

We have used and are using 2 who are classified as immigrants but they were either born here or were brought here as young children and they don't know any other home. It doesn't seem right to deport them yet, under the new law that may happen.

We have used the program for the last for years. Our local competitors has. that puts us at a disadvantage. The second concern that I have is the provision that forces us to hire & keep locals that apply. I really can live with the hiring of locals but in order to reasonably work people you have to have the ability to fire the ones that cannot or will not do job.

We must hire only (American citizens) for our labor force. Our country cannot tote the load of aliens. This has a direct impact on me. it causes higher school tax, stress at our county hospitals, and a burden on all infrastructure. The answer is higher prices for commodities and in return a strict regulation of not hiring aliens. These higher prices will allow in return for better labor wages and more qualified people. Please stop the hiring of Aliens. If you are not a citizen of this country you should not be eligible for work or any other benefit programs from our Great Nation. Thanks

We must make e-verify mandatory, we must deter illegal immigration by hitting it where it make the most impact. If there is no work for them, they will leave our state thus reducing costs, i.e., medicare, WIC, food stamps and public school overcrowding and other benefits that they receive for their "anchor children"

We need a legal migrant work force. Locals will not work. They don't have to. Most are on disability. H2A program is redievulous and too expensive. If we don't get farm labor, America will starve to death.

We need a legal work force! we need policy that will encourage workers to be documented legally, (fingerprint, retina scan etc) so that when you are presented with social security and other ID cards, it does not have to look like a deck of playing cards and the employer is to one to "go fish". Yes we know about e-verify and other sources, but sometimes workers in your crew change during the "day". It is frustrating for small growers who have short harvest window of only a few weeks to guarantee H-2-A workers a certain salary, housing etc, for a perishable crop that sometimes fails due to weather, disease or other factors. Thanks!

We need a less expensive, less paperwork intensive way to hire legal workers.

We need a simple, legal way to connect farmers who need workers with workers who need jobs. Quick and easy. In and out with no strings, bells, or whistles such as path to citizenship etc. They need jobs and we need them! What's so difficult to figure out here is how our government continues to complicate a simple solution!

We need a work program managed by the Dept. of Agric. That would allow us to bring in legal labor on a seasonal basis so the workers would go home at the end of the season and some back next season without all of the red tape and problem we now have. They would not bring their family with them. We use to go to Canada to harvest tobacco each year under a program like this. Mexico is already shipping in large amounts of Veg. into the US. We need help or more and more of our food will be imported-no good. Because of all of the gov. programs we have for our local work force, they will not or do not have work to live as they like.

We need a workable H2A program that's user friendly. My business & any seasonal business need worker's only in season. Using migrants through H2A allows me to get the same, trained people back each year. If I have to hire new untrained workers each season-by the time the training period is over - the season is over. Makes no sense.

We need immigrant labor (workers provided by (GA Depr Labor) proved this, only (1 out of approximately 20) worked more than 1 day. Immigrant, dont need citizenship they need temporary WORK PERMITS and TEMPORARY DRIVERS LICENSE, They need to pay taxes while they are here to cover emergency medical expense et. In the USA human rights are hold in high regard, we shouldn't allow our law enforcement to become Thugs and treat people less than human American people will not work,

they have been raised on welfare checks, or have been taken care of by the prison system. GA legal services has made the H2A program worthless. In the 1960s migrant labor was placed on farms through the county extension office (County Assent) we need the lawyers out of the circle. 1- got farmers orba labor though county extenso office 2- let immigrants register with GA Dept of Labor 3- Give illegal amnesty to registor with GA Dept of labor 4- Resume all wakkan to pay tax 5- Let Ga Dept of Labor and county extenion office work toegether to fill labor needs in Georgia

We need immigration labor because we support those that don't want to work. Give them green cards and charge them taxes

We need immigration reform so people can get green cards to work. They are able and willing, but must look over their shoulders constantly. most are moving out of the state from fear of new law.

We need Indians and not chiefs. We need people who will do a job I which they are asked and not complain.

We need migrant workers, Mexican, Haitians, etc. Georgia immigration reform will hurt Georgia farmers, construction, timer and others. We need them more than they need us. They will go to states with more liberal immigration laws. Georgia needs to back off.

We need to come up with a solution to make the ones who are here now that are working hard and trying to do better to get legal and keep them here. In our industry, we cannot operate without them. They are very important to our economy. The white, young generation does not want these jobs. I try to hire them all the time and I have nothing but problems out of them. This is a shame that it has come to do

WE need to fix it NOW not tomorrow tomorrow is too late. you cannot have a crop once it is ripe

We need to have immigrants in our workforce. But we need to be able to charge them for the services they receive. Maybe allow them to have a non-citizen number to work and pay taxes, and be able to buy insurance, etc. If they run up a medical expense then their number will be tagged as having to pay back the debt. They have a right to work, but not vote. They can operate in the system, and help pay for the system's infrastructure.

We need to restrict illegal immigrants from the state

We realize that our country (state) has a problem with illegal immigration, as we also realize that Georgia has a (serious) problem with the (field) workforce that Georgia needs, and has to have (less) a very big impact of Georgia's Income. Without the (field) type workers own farm has to have, own farm will be forced out of business. We ask that Georgia elected officials help keep our Georgia farm in business, Not put as out of business. Thanks for your efforts and support in Georgia Farming.

We use the H2A program & employee locals/ American citizens who are currently unemployed. We have advertised in surrounding counties and currently have more applications on file than we have had in the past years. There are citizens who need jobs!

We were using e-verify before this year because we did not want to be responsible for determining if the documents presented to us were illegal or invalid. E-verify removes this responsibility from us and puts it back on the government which is where it should be.

We would like to see a large legal workforce that is willing and able to do labor intensive work, such as working with the cotton gin.

Well, we cannot get Caucasian men to do this kind of work. I'm not old enough to know how America made opportunities for all the European immigrants in the early 1900s, but the Hispanic labor force needs an opportunity to become legal. Not amnesty for all, including the criminal sector, but an honest workable chance for the honest hard working families that are trying to make a life for themselves.

What can I say that anyone would really listen to? We work 60 hour weeks, bust our butts, build a business, pay exorbitant taxes and then are told by knee jerk reactionary politicians that Americans will fill these jobs. I've been at this 22 years and that is simply not true. Americans will apply, and they will show up until the first pay day, but 95% of them self-destruct. Hispanics aren't taking jobs by working for less. All my employees have the same pay scale. In most cases my Hispanics make more than my Americans because THEY EARNED IT. Hispanics are here because nature abhors a vacuum. They took the jobs Americans won't or can't do. No politician is really interested in hearing this. The problem isn't the Hispanics here, the problem is lousy schools, rampant drugs, etc. You are merely putting a band aid on the problem and the unintended consequences will be closing businesses and rotting crops in the fields. What most people do not understand is that these "illegal workers" pay in there payroll taxes. They are hard workers, I suggest finding a way to use the workers that are already here. I don't care what you say our local legal citizens are NOT GOING TO DO THESE JOBS. The Agriculture Industry is going to collapse without these workers.

While I do not non-citizen workers many friends do. There is a real need for an inexpensive guest worker program that keeps workers in Georgia when needed.

Why in the world can the government not come up with a functional and cost effective guest worker program???

Will someone please step forward and ignore public opinion and look at facts. America is all immigrants. The US and the state are not capable of arresting and deporting these undocumented workers. Hey, they're standing on every Home Depot and Lowes parking lots in plain sight. Close the border, ID them for security reasons, provide access to citizenship, and get the tremendous revenue they're able to pay in income taxes and fines and fees to pay for the services they use (schools, hospitals, roads, etc.) I remember in the 70's everyone saying if you bought a foreign car you put Americans out of work. Nothing stopped the trend, and nothing will stop this. Deal with it, it isn't reversible either.

Without some kind of reform my operation will be severely impaired.

Workers are needed from somewhere. Even though the local population don't have jobs, they will not work. They don't necessary need the income, make all of their basic needs are taken care of by the government programs, that of help fund

Would like to see a guest worker program implemented that would allow migrant workers to come in legally for a period of time, but must return at the end of harvest. H2A program is too expensive. Farmer cannot guarantee a monetary amount if work is not available due to weather, low price etc. Guest workers should not be allowed to have "free" health care or be allowed to participate in any social programs except emergency care while they are here.

You can't stop them You can't send back STOP Cuddling them issue Red Social Security Card Take out taxes & let them support themselves Tax money going out of country

Appendix 4: Collins, Georgia Planting and Harvesting Contract Comparison

Planting Contract 2010

10/27/2010 - 12/31/2010

62 domestic workers hired (11 of which are migrant workers)
6 completed the contract (5 of which are migrant workers)

11/1/2010

18	non migrant domestic workers	9,691.50 feet planted	538 avg feet per worker
7	migrant domestic workers	8,882.50 feet planted	1269 avg feet per worker
<u>34</u>	total workers planting	<u>18,574.00</u> total feet planted	

11/2/2010

22	non migrant domestic workers	16,648.50 feet planted	757 avg feet per worker
9	migrant domestic workers	12,685.25 feet planted	1,409 avg feet per worker
<u>36</u>	total workers planting	<u>29,333.75</u> total feet planted	

4	total acres in 2 days with an average of 20 non migrant domestic workers
3	total acres in 2 days with an average of 8 migrant domestic workers
<u>7</u>	

17 total acres in 1 day with an average of 50 crew leader migrant workers

11/23/2010

14 total acres planted by 42 H2A workers
(random date selected)

Harvest Contract 2011

4/02/2011 - 06/10/2011

60 domestic workers hired (22 of which were migrant workers)
16 completed the contract (12 of which were migrant workers)
(9 of these workers actually worked in the field but only 4 of these workers clipped at a piece rate and only 1 of these workers clipped full time)

Average \$ earned per hour

H2A	\$ 12.18	total average for length of contract	
	\$ 15.14	highest worker average for length of contract	**\$19.72 highest daily rate for this worker**
	\$ 8.25	lowest worker average for length of contract	
Domestic	\$ 9.74	total average for length of contract	(\$12.29 migrant worker and \$7.06 non migrant worker)
	\$ 13.87	highest worker average for length of contract	(migrant worker)
	\$ 3.11	lowest worker average for length of contract	(non migrant worker)